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U.S. Naval officer perceptions of billet assignments and the placement/assignment process.

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THESIS

U.S. NAVAL OFFICER PERCEPTIONS
OF BILLET ASSIGNMENTS AND THE
PLACEMENT/ASSIGNMENT PROCESS

by

Michael John Panchura, Jr.

June 1979

Thesis Advisor: J. K. Arima

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U.S. Naval officer perceptions of billet assignments and reactions to the detailing process preceding such assignments were ascertained by a questionnaire developed and administered to a cohort of Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) student officers which had recently received Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders. A majority of the survey population felt that its next assignment would benefit overall career development. Similarly, the majority was satisfied with the accompanying detailing process. Significant departures from this trend were noted for the aviator and Naval flight officer community. Factors involved in new billet and detailing satisfaction as well as overall career aspirations were determined.

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INTRODUCTION

Problem

In his written instructions to the 1979 Line Flag Selection Board, Navy Secretary W. Graham Claytor, Jr., emphasized:

"...The Board must continue to keep in mind that there is no norm or preconceived pattern that leads to Flag Rank." (Navy Times, 29 Jan 1979)

Information contained in the Unrestricted Line Officer Career Planning Guidebook (1979, p. viii) more generally stresses:

"There is no one promotional path within the Navy, nor should there be. The officer who best matches personal interests with requirements for fulfilling naval assignments and amplifies those interests with experience and education is the officer most likely to progress in a naval career. The path is competitive; there is no single criterion for achievement - not a graduate degree, nor a particular specialty, a specific combination of specialty and subspecialty assignments, nor an assignment to service college."

Vance Packard (1962, p. 166), in his bestselling novel, The Pyramid Climbers, offers advice which tends to take exception with the above contentions. Packard likens modern organizations, such as the U.S. Navy, to pyramids. He states that:

"Modern pyramids frequently have at least one upward trail which offers relatively easy and direct passage into the cloud-covered area near the pinnacle. They also have a number of well-beaten paths which, around the second corner, abruptly dwindle as a steep face of rock looms.

The location of the more promising paths varies from pyramid to pyramid. Usually, however, location is influenced by three considerations: what has been the secret of the organization's success in the recent past; what people think that secret is; and what is likely to be the key factor influencing the organization's prosperity in the future."

It may be, then, that despite contentions that there is no sure career path to success in the Navy, Naval officers may think or perceive that there indeed does exist a predefined trail to the cloud-covered area at the top of the Naval hierarchy. Furthermore, an officer's perceptions of his or her progress along a certain career path may have a significant effect on the decision to serve until voluntarily or involuntarily retired or to resign.

In order for the Navy to be able to plan effectively and to establish sound officer policy, it might be prudent to have an indication of the desirability of various career paths as perceived by the officers themselves. One way to get an indication of this sort is to attempt to find out how officers individually view and react to billet assignments at specific points in their careers. Then, should trends be found in these views and reactions, they may be used to improve planning and policy decisions.

Background

Any research into the field of career patterns should begin with the question: What constitutes a "career"? Hall (1976) points out multiple definitions of this term. Some classify it as following and ascending over time the organization's career

path or accepting its definition of becoming successful. Some view it as passing through a series of stages to become a full-fledged member of one's profession. Others view the career as a life-long sequence of jobs or roles. There are even those who feel that the term means one's total personal history through life, not just one's work history.

The U.S. Navy's Unrestricted Line Officer Career Planning Guidebook (1979) defines career as a progression of billet assignments. The assignments levy a continual increase in the level of responsibility along the progression. Each assignment is meant to utilize past experience, training, and education. In addition, each new billet develops and expands an officer's experience base for future assignments with the goal being to develop the individual to his or her highest potential.

Derr (1977) stipulates that the definition of career is as much or more the product of the individual as it is of the organization. He defines career as a sequence of work-related experiences which reflects how a person thinks and acts over time regarding his own internal definition of work success. Moreover, career success is defined by the individual according to his values, concepts, and opinions; therefore, if the organization is to arrive at a long-term program of worker participation, motivation, retention, and productivity, the career must be understood from the employee's perspective.

Contemporary literature abounds with much excellent career-progression research which does, in fact, take the employee's perceptions into account. Gemmill and DaSalvia (1977) examined

the promotion beliefs of managers and related them to actual career advancement. Van Maanen and Katz (1976) investigated work satisfaction among individuals within, as well as between, particular careers. Hall and Morgan (1974) described how people at various stages in their careers react to their jobs and to others in the organization. In military-related research, the U.S. Air Force has published numerous reports, most notably those by Haynes and Herbert (1977) and Howie (1977), which examine Air Force officer careers. Additionally, in recent months, several individuals have conducted career pattern-related research that pertains specifically to U.S. Navy officers. In particular, Robertson and Pass (1979) studied the relationship of initial duty assignments to the retention of Surface Warfare officers. Holzbach (1979) also delved into the perceptions of Surface Warfare Officers regarding types of duty. With the exception of Derr's research, however, there is a conspicuous lack of study concerning the career aspirations of the overall United States Navy officer corps. This research will be an attempt to commence filling that void.

Purpose

The general objective of this research was to develop a method for determining and examining:

(1) the perceptions of U.S. Naval Officers regarding the desirability of various billet assignments, and

(2) the reactions of these officers to the detailing process preceding such assignments.

Specifically, the intention of this project was to formulate a viable survey instrument with which to measure these perceptions and reactions, pretest it among a cohort of Naval Postgraduate School students, present the data obtained, and offer procedures for statistically analyzing the responses.

The framework thus devised can presumably be utilized to conduct a larger scale research effort which would solicit responses representative of the entire Navy Officer Corps.

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Survey

In attempting to meet one of the objectives of this survey (i.e., to determine and examine the perceptions of Navy officers toward various billet assignments), it was decided to pursue those officers who recently received orders and were about to assume a new assignment, rather than those incumbent in a billet. It was felt that this procedure would preclude responses from being a reflection on the individual officer's present or gaining command. In following this method, it was concurrently possible to get an officer's evaluation of the Placement/Assignment process while it was still fresh in his mind.

Another consideration in the design of this survey was to obtain information from the recipient of orders that would be substantive and would form the basis for constructive action. In considering the type of survey instrument to be used, it was decided that a questionnaire would be the most efficient and cost-effective means of obtaining the required information.

Design of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed for use primarily with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) by Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner and Bent (1970).

There were four key biographic variables associated with the responses. These were:

(1) Rank
(2) Designator Code
(3) Years of commissioned service
(4) Years in present grade

The questionnaire consisted of thirteen questions which are described in order below. Appendix A depicts a copy of the actual form and letter of instruction used in the survey.

Desirability of Billet Assignments

One of the Methodological problems faced in this study was essentially that of devising some means to get an overall picture of billet desirability as expressed by Naval officers in their own terms. This problem is a very basic one in social research because everyone has different subjective standards which define and guide his or her own perceptions.

The solution was to use the Self-Anchoring Striving Scale developed by Hadley Cantril (1965). This entailed using the ladder device depicted in Figure 1. The respondents were asked to define, on the basis of their own assumptions and in regard to their career development, the two extremes or anchoring points on the spectrum, the top of the ladder representing the "best" billet to which they could have been assigned and the bottom representing the "worst" billet to which they could have been assigned. They then were asked, given this spectrum, to rate where on the ladder their next billet fitted best.

1. Below is a picture of a ladder. In regard to furthering your overall career development, suppose the top of the ladder represents the *best possible billet* to which you could have been assigned at this time and the bottom of the ladder represents the *worst possible billet* to which you could have been assigned at this time.

Now, consider the new billet to which you have actually been assigned. Where on the ladder do you feel it belongs? (Please *circle* the number in the appropriate step of the ladder).

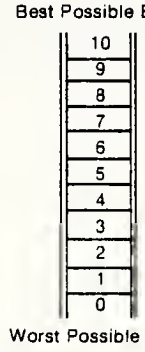


Figure 1. Survey Question Number 1 with accompanying Self-Anchoring Striving Scale

Characteristics of "Best" and "Worst" Possible Assignments

Since, in Question 1, the respondents were asked to rate their next billet assignment in comparison to what they perceived to be the "best" and "worst" possible assignments, it was decided to obtain a concrete description of the characteristics of such assignments. In this regard, seven major categories used to describe a type of billet were offered as depicted in Figure 2. The categories used were as follows:

(1) Sea - Shore
(2) Line - Staff
(3) CONUS - Overseas
(4) East/Atlantic Fleet - West/Pacific Fleet - Washington
(5) Specialty - Subspecialty
(6) Operational - Technical
(7) Flying - Nonflying

It was hypothesized that the characteristics obtained could be used in a multiple regression analysis to determine if they

influenced the rating given by respondents to their next billet assignment.

2. Column 1, below, lists several categories which may be used to describe a billet.

In column 2 please select the categories that describe the *best possible billet* to which you could have been assigned at this time. (Place an "X" in the appropriate box(es).) In column 3 pleese describe the *worst possible* billet.

Column 1 Categories	Column 2 Best Possible Billet	Column 3 Worst Possible Billet
Sea	☐	☐
Shore	☐	☐
Line	☐	☐
Staff	☐	☐
CONUS	☐	☐
Overseas	☐	☐
East/Atlantic Fleet (does *not* include Washington)	☐	☐
Washington	☐	☐
West/Pacific Fleet	☐	☐
Specialty (Includes 1000, 1050 billets)	☐	☐
Subspecialty	☐	☐
Operational	☐	☐
Technical	☐	☐
Flying	☐	☐
Nonflying	☐	☐

Figure 2. Survey Question Number 2 with accompanying list of billet type characteristics

NOTE: Several respondents encountered some difficulty in interpreting survey question 3 & 4, which tended to overlap or duplicate questions 1 & 2. Therefore, although 3 & 4 were answered by all respondents, it was decided that enough confusion was generated to warrant excluding them from the analysis. See Appendix A for the format used.

Sources of Information Regarding Availability of Billet Assignments

Naval officers have access to a myriad of information sources that may be used in determining available billet assignments. These include such publications as the Officer Billet Summary, the Unrestricted Line (URL) Officer Career Planning Guidebook, the Officer Personnel Newsletter, and Navy Times.

Additionally, an officer can obtain career information from his detailer, his peer group, his Commanding Officer, and other senior officers. In an effort to determine which of these sources were most readily used by the respondents, Question Number 5 was developed. The format used is depicted in Figure 3. The eight sources listed above were offered as possible choices and blank spaces were made available for possible "write-in" sources of information.

5. Consider again all of the billets that you thought were available to you for assignment at this time. Please indicate below the source(s) of information which enabled you to determine that these billets were available to you. (Place an "X" in the appropriate blank space(s).)

_____ a. Navy Times
_____ b. Officer Personnel Newsletter
_____ c. Officer Billet Summary
_____ d. Your Commanding Officer
_____ e. Another Senior Officer
_____ f. Career Planning Guidebook
_____ g. Your Detailer
_____ h. Your peer group
_____ i. Other _____ (Fill in, if applicable)
_____ j. Other _____

Figure 3. Survey question Number 5 with sources of information used to determine the availability of billet assignments

Timeliness of Billet Assignments

Certainly one of the most important aspects considered by officers in the evaluation of a billet assignment is its timeliness in comparison with the perceived "normal" career progression. The URL Career Planning Guidebook depicts a professional development path for each designator community which officers can use as a guideline to measure the timeliness of each progressive billet assignment. Thus, survey question 6 was devised to enable respondents to include whether or not they

were being assigned to their next particular billet at the most appropriate time for proper career development. Figure 4 depicts the format used on the questionnaire.

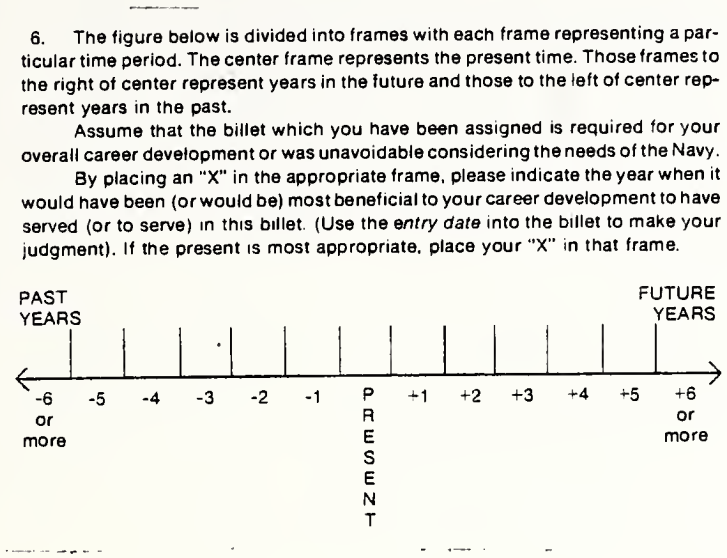


Figure 4. Survey question Number 6 with accompanying timeliness scale

Perceived Relative Importance of Career Milestones

Over the course of a career an officer may expect to encounter a number of career milestones including Postgraduate Education, Subspecialty Designation, Promotion, Service College Education, XO and CO Screen, Command, Operational Duty and Staff Duty Experience, and Retirement. Of course, not all Naval officers will encounter all these milestones and, concurrently, not all officers may want to encounter all these milestones. However, certain circumstances may occur in an officer's career which can help or hinder the attainment of any and all milestones. The most notable circumstance, of course, is the favorable or unfavorable evaluation of an officer's performance. Indeed,

officers undoubtedly perceive that the Fitness Report can make or break a career. Another type of circumstance which might be discussed in this regard is that which is known as the "billet assignment." Some officers may, in fact, perceive that serving in a certain billet assignment may help or hinder the attainment of specific career milestones. With this in mind, survey question Number 7 was developed to determine which career events are perceived to be the most important to the surveyed officers. It was hypothesized that the data obtained could be related to particular billet assignments to determine which billets are deemed "career-enhancing" and which are not.

In survey question 7 the respondents were presented with a list of the milestones mentioned above and two blank spaces available for "write-in" milestones. The officers were instructed to make an ordinal ranking of these milestones with respect to their own personal priorities. They were advised to choose as many of the milestones as they deemed appropriate and to feel free to rank two or more of them as the same priority if desired. A total of 10 milestone categories were used: the nine listed on the questionnaire form plus one titled OTHER.

In survey question Number 8 respondents were asked to provide background data by listing those career milestones which they had already attained. Figure 5 depicts the format used for questions 7 & 8.

7. Below is a list of "MILESTONES" (i.e. significant events) which a Naval Officer might expect to encounter during his career. In the "PRIORITY" column please indicate in the spaces provided your *personal* priority for reaching each milestone whether you have reached it or not. (Use the number 1 for your first priority, 2 for your second priority, etc.). If you feel that two or more of the milestones have equal priority, use the same number for each. If any of the milestones do not figure in your career plans, place an "X" in the adjoining space.

NOTE: The "MILESTONES ATTAINED" column will be used for answering the *next* question (i.e. Question 8).

PRIORITY	MILESTONES	MILESTONES ATTAINED
a. _____	a. Postgraduate education	a. _____
b. _____	b. Subspecialty designation	b. _____
c. _____	c. Promotion with year group	c. _____
d. _____	d. Service College education	d. _____
e. _____	e. XO/CO screen	e. _____
f. _____	f. Command	f. _____
g. _____	g. Operational Duty experience	g. _____
h. _____	h. Staff Duty experience	h. _____
i. _____	i. Retirement	i. _____
j. _____	j. Other (_____)	j. _____
k. _____	k. Other (_____)	k. _____

8. In the "MILESTONES ATTAINED" column in Question 7, please place an "X" in the appropriate spaces to indicate those milestones which you have already attained.

Figure 5. Survey question Numbers 7 & 8 with accompanying list of career milestones

Mechanism of the Placement/Assignment Process

Prior to discussing the design of the remaining questions, a brief overview of the Placement/Assignment Process will be presented.

The assignment process begins when an officer is made available to his or her detailer. This availability indicates the officer has been scheduled for relief at his present duty station and can now be reassigned. The detailer examines a listing of billets that will be vacated during a time period that is congruent with the officer's relief at his current duty station. The detailer examines the officer's performance record, qualifications, and a card from the officer known as a preference card on which the officer has expressed his or her personal desires for future assignments. The detailer selects an

assignment based on his personal assessment of the particular officer's situation and then consults his list of billets which must be filled within the time frame near the officer's availability date. Finally, taking into consideration the Navy's current requirements, the officer's qualifications, the officer's need for professional development, and the officer's personal desires, in that order, he presents the officer's record to the cognizant placement officer. The placement officer reviews the officer's record, decides whether or not he is reasonably qualified to fill the billet in question, and either rejects or accepts the officer for the billet. In case of a rejection the detailer may elect one of two options: (1) agree and attempt to place the officer in another billet, or (2) disagree and take the matter to a higher level for resolution. (Shepherd, 1974)

The actual process of reassigning officers, then, is a distribution function that is constrained by the number of billets to be filled and the number of officers to be moved. Another constraint, that will not be considered in this report, is the availability of funds for making the moves. Otherwise, there are three objectives that are to be subjectively balanced by the detailer in exercising the distribution function. These are:

(1) Meet the needs of the Navy

(2) Enhance the professional development (i.e., career needs) of the officer, and

(3) Ensure the continued professional motivation and dedication of the officer (i.e., satisfy his personal desires).

These three objectives are collectively known as the

"triad of Navy detailing." Survey question Numbers 9, 10, & 11 were devised to solicit the officers' reactions in regard to the extent to which these objectives were fulfilled during the process preceding the officers' most recent billet assignment. Survey question Number 12 asked the officers to signify their satisfaction with the overall Placement/Assignment process. A Likert type attitude scale was used for each of these questions as depicted in Figure 6.

NOTE: The following questions relate to the Placement/Assignment Process which preceded your next billet assignment.

NOTE: In answering questions 9, 10, and 11 please *circle* one of the following choices:

1. To a great extent
2. To some extent
3. To an average extent
4. To a little extent
5. To no extent

9. To what extent do you feel your "personal desires" were considered?

1 2 3 4 5

10. To what extent do you feel your "career needs" were considered?

1 2 3 4 5

11. To what extent do you feel the "needs of the Navy" influenced your assignment?

1 2 3 4 5

12. What are your feelings toward the entire Placement/Assignment process which resulted in your assignment to your next billet? (Please *circle* your choice).

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied

Figure 6. Survey question Numbers 9, 10, 11 & 12 with accompanying Likert type attitude scales

The final question of the survey was a free-response type designed to give respondents the opportunity to express

openly their thoughts toward the Placement/Assignment process which led to their next billet assignments. The format of this question (Number 13) can be found on the questionnaire form in Appendix A.

Additional background data were also solicited from respondents. This included Rank, Designator, Time in Service, Time in Grade, Subspecialty Code, Title of Next Billet Assignment, and Name and Geographical location of next duty station. These last two items were used to determine the Naval Officer Billet Classification (NOBC) Code for each particular billet discussed in this report. Appendix B contains a complete listing of these billets.

Selection of the Sample

The population surveyed consisted of 174 Naval Officers in attendance at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). All were scheduled to graduate within 3-6 months of the questionnaire distribution date of 9 January 1979. This group was selected because all had recently received or were about to receive Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders. Of this population, a total of 105 officers responded to the questionnaire resulting in a response rate of 60.3 percent. Two of the returned questionnaires were unusable and one was submitted too late to be included in the analysis. Table 1 lists by Officer Designator Code the total number of officers surveyed and the total number which responded.

It must be pointed out that the graduation dates for the different NPS curricula are staggered so as to accommodate the

Table 1

Respondents by Designator

Officer Designator		Number Surveyed	Number Respondents
1100	URL - No Warfare Specialty	10	7
1110	Surface Warfare	56	31
1120/1125	Submarine Warfare	7	4*
1130	Special Warfare	3	2
1310/1315	Aviation Warfare(Pilot)	31	18
1320	Aviation Warfare(NFO)	22	11*
1400	Engineering Duty	1	1
1460	Engineering Duty(in Qual process)	9	2
1510	Aeronautical Engineering Duty	2	1
1610	Special Duty(Cryptology)	3	2*
1630	Special Duty(Intelligence)	8	7
1800	Special Duty(Geophysics)	3	3
2300	Medical Service Corps	4	3
2302	Staff Corps	1	1
2900	Nurse Corps	1	1
3100	Supply Corps	9	6
4100	Chaplain Corps	1	1
5100	Civil Engineer Corps	3	2
DESIG NOT PROVIDED		NA	2
	Total	174	105

*One returned questionnaire from each of these designator groups was unusable.

normal student load. As a result, the majority of officers surveyed in this study were students of Naval Intelligence, Administrative Science, Operations Research, and Computer Technology. Correspondingly, there was a paucity of respondents from the Aeronautical, Naval and Weapons Engineering curricula. This situation obviously may have biased the types of billets addressed by this survey.

RESULTS

Rated Desirability of Billet Assignments

A histogram of the distribution of responses to survey question Number 1 is presented in Figure 7. The horizontal axis lists the rating used by respondents to evaluate their next billet assignment. This "Billet Rating" is on a scale of 1 to 10. The vertical axis shows the frequency with which each rating was selected. It can be seen that the distribution of billet ratings of this particular sample population is skewed toward the lower end of the scale. Pertinent statistical data are presented in the upper right hand corner of the figure.

To determine the effects of community and length of service on billet ratings, the population was broken down into the three largest Designator Code categories: 1110 (Surface Warfare Officers), 13XX (Aviators/NFOs), and "Other" designators. These three groups were further distinguished by total years of commissioned service: less than 7.0 years, 7.0-10.0 years, and greater than 10.0 years. A mean billet rating for each of these groups was calculated and is presented in Table 2.

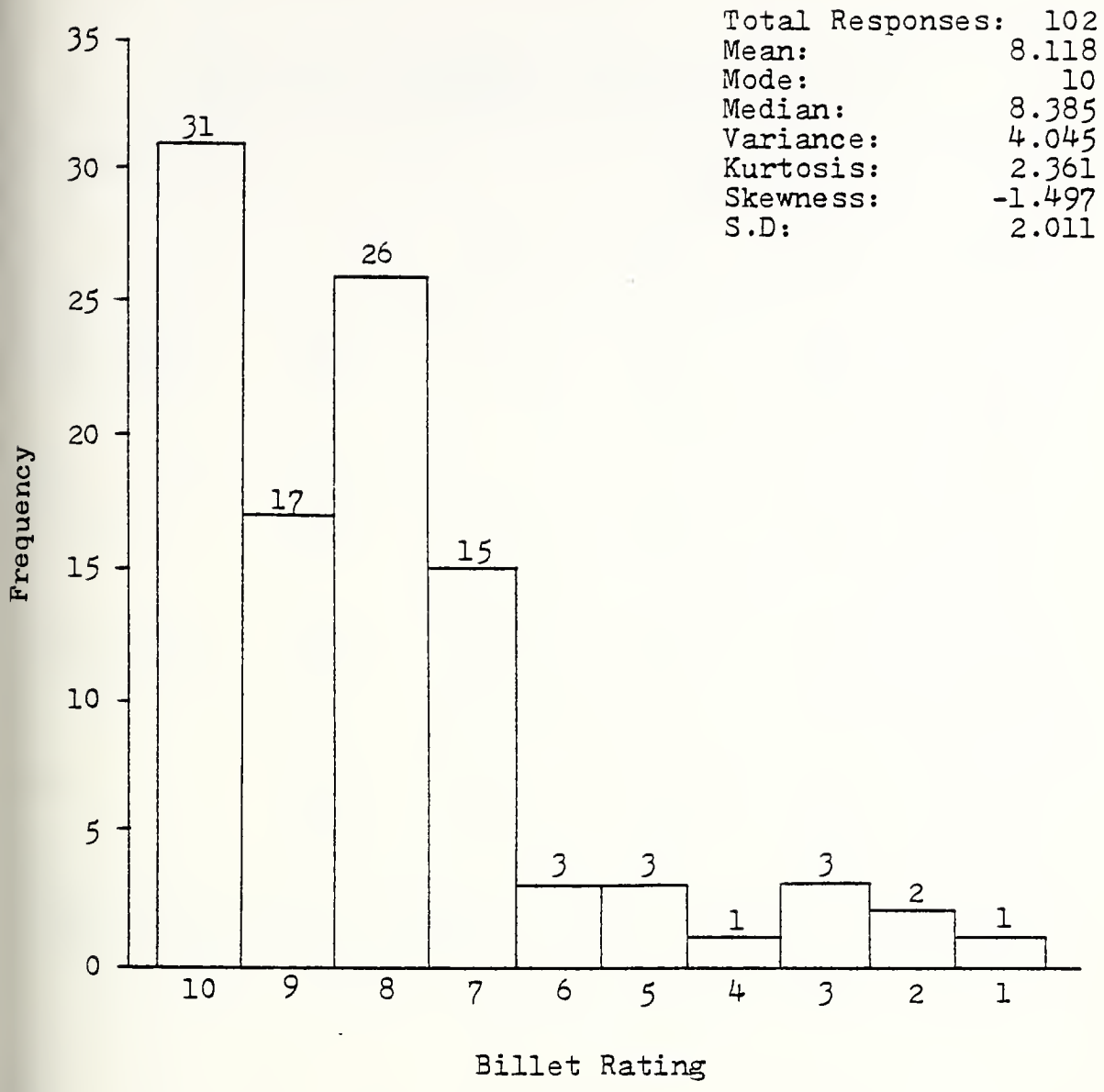


Figure 7. Histogram of "Billet Ratings" on a scale of 1 to 10, with a 10 signifying a "best" billet and a 1 signifying a "worst" billet.

Table 2

Mean Billet Ratings* of Various Designator and Year Groups

Year Group		Designator			
		1110	13XX	Other	All
Less than 7.0 years	Mean	9.3	5.9	8.5	8.1
	S.D.	1.2	3.4	1.5	2.5
	N	17	12	13	42
7.0 to 10.0 years	Mean	7.8	7.6	8.1	7.9
	S.D.	0.4	1.1	1.3	1.2
	N	5	10	17	32
More than 10.0 years	Mean	8.8	8.4	8.1	8.5
	S.D.	1.3	3.0	2.1	1.9
	N	11	5	10	26
All	Mean	8.9	7.0	8.2	8.11
	S.D.	1.2	2.8	1.6	2.01
	N	33	27	40	100

*Billet ratings were measured on a scale of 1 to 10, with a 1 signifying a "worst" billet and a 10 signifying a "best" billet

A fixed-effects analysis of variance was conducted on the designator-by-year group data shown in Table 2. The results of this analysis (Table 3) show a significant effect for designators and the designator-by-year group interaction. The former is attributable, primarily, to the generally low billet ratings of the aviators and NFOs (13XX), while the latter would seem to be due to the much greater effect of year groups for the 13XX category. That is, the billet ratings improve quite markedly for the aviators and NFOs, while they are much more similar for the 1110 and Other designator categories.

Table 4 provides a listing of the billets evaluated in this report grouped by categories and sub-categories of U.S. Navy billets as defined in the Manual of Navy Officer Manpower and Personnel Classifications (Volume 1). The center column lists the Naval Officer Billet Classification (NOBC) Codes for those billets which will be filled by the respondents to this survey. The right hand column gives the sample size, the mean billet rating, and the standard deviation (S.D.) of the ratings given to the billets in each category and sub-category. The billet titles which correspond to the NOBC Codes can be found in Appendix B.

Appendix C lists all NOBCs and Billet Titles under the corresponding billet rating assigned to each by the respondents. Appendix D depicts a condensed version of the information presented in Appendix C.

Table 3

Analysis of Variance of Next Billet Ratings
of Different Designator Communities
and Year Groups

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Significance of F
Main Effects					
Designator (D)	50.943	2	25.471	7.440	0.001
Year Groups (Y)	1.323	2	0.661	0.193	0.825
Interactions					
D x Y	36.250	4	9.063	2.647	0.038
Residual	311.548	91	3.424		
Total	403.784	99			

Table 4

Billets (by NOBC Code) Evaluated in this Report

Category and Sub-Category*	NOBC's Included	Billet Rating N	Mean	S.D.
Naval Operations		39	8.1	1.84
Staff and Fleet Command	9025,9040,9042 9060,9065,9082	6	7.8	.75
Shipboard Operations and Weapons	9222,9228,9258,9260 9273,9274,9282,9284,9285	18	8.4	2.35
Communications	9510,9595	2	8.0	2.8
Intelligence	9600,9616,9617,9686	9	7.7	1.5
Other	9362,9442,9852,9965	4	8.0	.82
Aviation		15	7.2	2.88
Flight	8506,8538,8539,8571,8593	10	8.7	1.57
Ground Operations	8614,8620,8621	3	2.3	.58
Meteorology	8715	2	7.0	0
Supply and Fiscal		9	8.77	1.09
Fiscal	1055	2	7.5	.7
Inventory Control	1520	2	8.5	.7
General	1978,1984	5	9.4	.89
Personnel		25	8.64	2.04
General Training**	3289,3251,3254	20	8.9	1.77
General	3925,3943,3995	3	8.3	1.5
Other	3320,3701	2	6.5	4.9
Engineering	4205,7996,7998	3	8.3	.57
Sciences and Services	2170,2605	2	8.5	2.12
Health Care Services	0820,0915	2	6.0	1.4

* Obtained from Manual of Navy Officer Manpower and Personnel Classifications (Volume 1).

**Sixteen billets in this sub-category were assignments of 1110 officers to the Surface Warfare Officer Department Head Course. The mean billet rating for these was 9.5 (S.D. = .89).

Attributes of "Best" and "Worst" Possible Billet Assignments

Tables 5 and 6 list the frequency of responses obtained from survey question Number 2. Across the top of each table are the attributes used to describe the "best" (Table 5) and the "worst" (Table 6) possible billets to which the respondents felt they could have been assigned following graduation at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). The attributes used are as follows: (1) Sea, (2) Shore, (3) Line, (4) Staff, (5) CONUS (Continental United States), (6) Overseas, (7) East Coast/ Atlantic Fleet, (8) West Coast/Pacific Fleet, (9) Either West Coast or East Coast, (10) Washington, (11) Specialty, (12) Subspecialty, (13) Operational, (14) Technical, (15) Flying, and (16) Nonflying. Listed along the left-hand side of the table are the various Designator Codes and the sample sizes of the officers in the respective Designator communities. The tables also show the frequency of selection of the attributes by all Designator Codes.

Perceived Timeliness of Billet Assignments

Figure 8 gives the distribution of responses to survey question Number 6. The horizontal axis denotes the time periods during which respondents felt they should have been assigned to their next particular billet. The vertical axis measures the number of officers who selected each particular time period. As can be seen on the figure, 69 of 102 respondents indicated that they were being assigned to their next billet at the appropriate time in their careers (i.e., at present). This computes to 67 percent of the total survey population. Another

Table 5

Frequency of Selection (by Designator Code) of Attributes Describing the "Best" Billet Following NPS Graduation

Designator	(N)	Attributes*															
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1100	(7)	2	5	2	3	2	3	0	1	0	2	2	3	3	0	0	1
1110	(31)	19	11	16	1	10	2	8	3	1	2	5	5	14	3	0	4
112X	(3)	3	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
1130	(2)	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	1
131X	(18)	15	3	1	1	2	1	5	3	0	0	2	4	12	1	14	0
132X	(10)	6	0	2	4	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	6	5	0	5	2
1400	(1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
1460	(2)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
1510	(1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
1610	(1)	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
1630	(7)	2	4	0	2	1	4	0	2	0	2	2	1	3	1	0	1
1800	(3)	1	1	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	2	0	2	0	1	0
230X	(4)	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
2900	(1)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
3100	(6)	3	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
4100	(1)	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
5100	(2)	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
All	(100)	51	34	23	18	19	17	17	14	3	12	17	24	43	7	20	10

*Attributes

1	Sea	9	East or West
2	Shore	10	Washington
3	Line	11	Specialty
4	Staff	12	Subspecialty
5	CONUS	13	Operational
6	Overseas	14	Technical
7	East Coast/Atlantic Fleet	15	Flying
8	West Coast/Pacific Fleet	16	Nonflying

Table 6

Frequency of Selection (by Designator Code) of Attributes Describing the "Worst" Billet Following NPS Graduation

Designator	(N)	Attributes*															
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1100	(7)	2	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	0
1110	(31)	8	16	1	14	2	7	3	2	2	11	1	7	2	4	3	0
112X	(3)	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
1130	(2)	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
131X	(18)	4	6	2	5	5	5	1	2	0	3	0	1	0	0	1	14
132X	(10)	4	4	0	3	1	2	0	2	1	0	1	0	1	2	1	5
1400	(1)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1460	(2)	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
1510	(1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1610	(1)	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1630	(7)	3	1	1	3	2	2	1	2	0	3	1	0	2	0	1	0
1800	(3)	0	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
230X	(4)	3	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0
2900	(1)	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3100	(6)	2	1	1	1	1	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
4100	(1)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5100	(2)	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
All	(100)	32	35	8	32	15	22	10	13	3	25	5	10	7	8	6	20

*Attributes

1	Sea	9	East or West
2	Shore	10	Washington
3	Line	11	Specialty
4	Staff	12	Subspecialty
5	CONUS	13	Operational
6	Overseas	14	Technical
7	East Coast/Atlantic Fleet	15	Flying
8	West Coast/Pacific Fleet	16	Nonflying

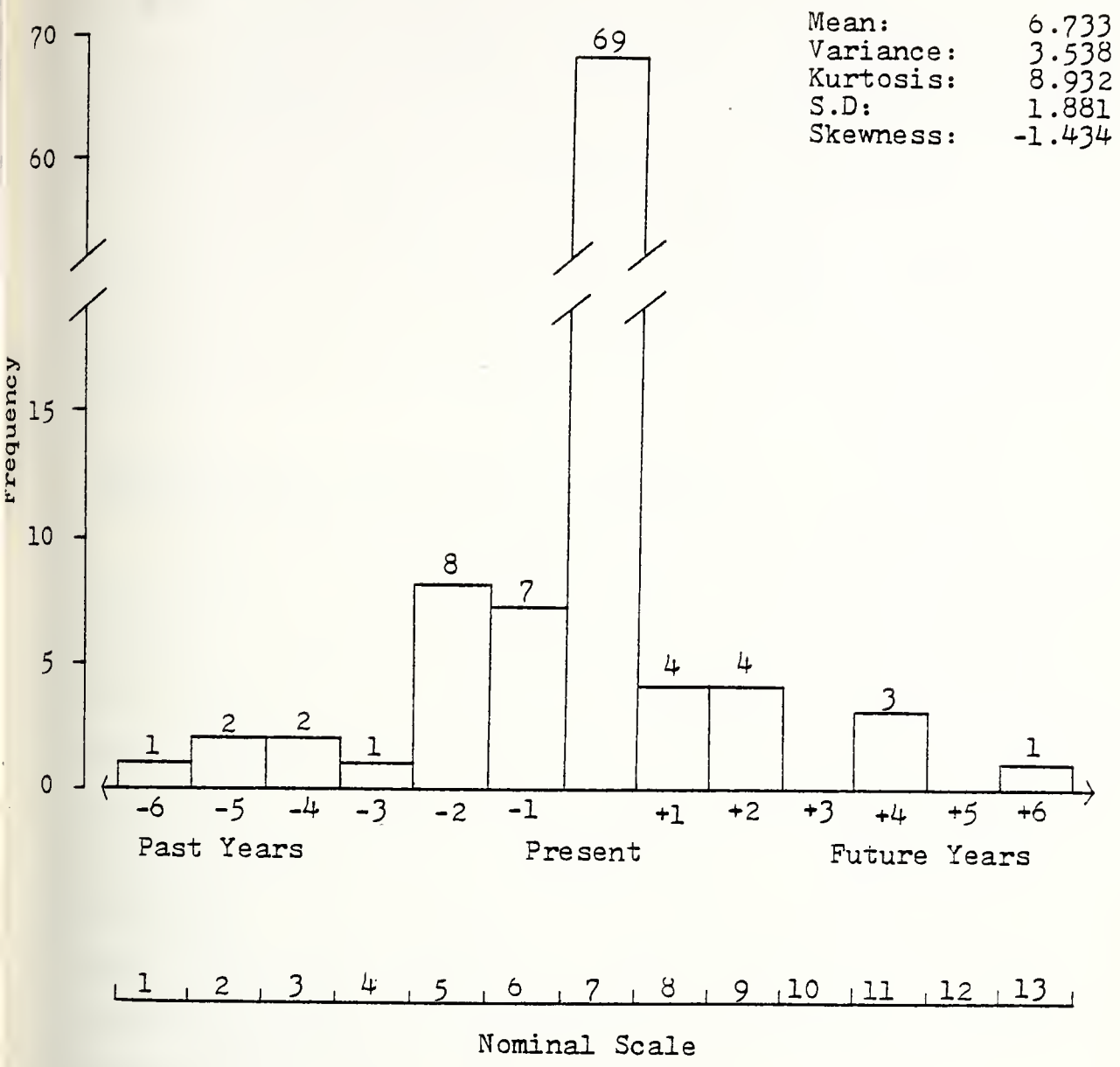


Figure 8. Histogram of respondents' perceived timeliness of the next billet assignment. The frequencies to the left of center indicate the number of officers who felt their next assignment should have come earlier in their careers. Those to the right of center indicate the number of officers who felt their next assignment should have come later.

20 percent of the population thought they should have been assigned to their next particular billet earlier in their careers, while 12 percent felt their next billet should have been assigned to them sometime in the future. One officer commented that he should never have been assigned to his new billet.

Of those officers in the 1110 community, 74 percent signified that the present time was best for their next assignment. Corresponding percentages for 13XXs and "Other" designators were 71 and 63 percent, respectively.

Determinants of Favorability of Billets

In an attempt to determine the relative importance of factors contributing to the billet ratings obtained in survey question Number 1, two multiple regression analyses were performed. In each analysis "Billet Rating" was used as the dependent variable. The independent variables used in the first multiple regression were "Rank," "Designator," "Best Time" (i.e., the variable obtained through survey question Number 6), and the "Best" billet attributes. In the second analysis the independent variables used were "Rank," "Designator," "Best Time," and the "Worst" billet attributes. To accomplish these analyses, a set of dummy variables was created since, with the exception of "Best Time," the data for all independent variables were categorical. These dummy variables and their coded data are shown in Table 7.

The multiple regressions were performed using the stepwise procedure available in the SPSS package of programs (Nie, et al., 1970). The regression was stopped when inclusion of a new

Table 7

Dummy Variables and Their Coded Values
Used in Multiple Regression Analysis

Descriptors	Dummy Variables											
	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10	D11	D12
Sea	1											
Shore	0											
Line		1										
Staff		0										
CONUS			1									
Overseas			0									
West Coast/Pac Flt				1	0	0						
Either East or West				0	1	0						
Washington				0	0	1						
East Coast/Atl Flt				0	0	0						
Specialty							1					
Subspecialty							0					
Operational								1				
Technical								0				
Flying									1			
Nonflying									0			
Designator 1110										1	0	
Designator 13XX										0	1	
Designator "Other"										0	0	
Rank: Lieutenant												1
Rank: LCDR/CDR												0

variable did not provide a significant increment in the explanation of total variance. An F ratio significant at the .05 level was used as a criterion for stopping. While recognizing its limitations (Wilkinson, 1979) the "adjusted R square" provided by the program was also used as a guide in stopping the regression.

Table 8 lists the zero-order correlations between the rating of the next billet and the timeliness and dummy variables used in the first multiple regression analysis which incorporated the "Best" billet attributes as independent variables. Included in the list of dummy variables is an interactive variable D119 which equals D11 (13XX designator) times D9 (flying/nonflying). This value was included in the regression analysis in lieu of D9 to offset the fact that several respondents not in the 13XX community selected the attributes "Flying" and "Nonflying" in answering survey question Number 2.

Table 9 shows the fitted multiple regression equation utilizing the "Best" billet attributes as independent variables. The adjusted R square value suggests that 25 percent of the variance in the dependent variable, "Billet Rating," is explained by the equation. The independent variable which explains the greatest amount of variance was D119. This can be attributed to the generally low billet ratings of those respondents in the 13XX community. The variable, "Best Time," while not having a significant zero-order correlation ($p<.001$), was included in the equation because it had a considerable effect in increasing the significance of the variables already in the equation.

Table 8

Zero-Order Correlations Between Next Billet Rating and Variables Used in the "Best" Billet Multiple Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable: Billet Rating	
Independent Variables*	Simple r
Best Time	0.14
D1	0.04
D2	0.20
D3	-0.03
D4	-0.07
D5	-0.24
D6	-0.05
D7	-0.07
D8	0.06
D10	0.27
D11	-0.34
D12	-0.02
D119**	-0.38

*The variables are defined in Table 7.

**D119 is an interactive variable computed (i.e., D119=D11 X D9) to offset the fact that several respondents not in the 13XX community chose "Flying" and "Nonflying" as attributes to describe "Best" billet.

Table 9

Results of Multiple Regression Analysis Using "Best" Billet Attributes as Independent Variables and Rating of the Next Billet as Dependent Variable

Multiple R	0.53591	
R Square	0.28720	
Adjusted R Square	0.25008	$F(5,96) = 7.3610,\ p<.001$
Standard Error	1.74177	

Variables in the Regression Equation

Variable*	B	BETA	STD ERROR B	F
D119**	-2.300307	-0.47271	0.44454	26.776
D5	-2.953219	-0.24930	1.06055	7.754
D8	0.900836	0.22505	0.36706	6.023
D7	-1.077188	-0.20954	0.46593	5.345
Best Time	0.171959	0.16003	0.09537	3.251
(Constant)	7.292687			

* See Table 7 for explanation of the dummy variables.

** Interactive variable which explains the joint effect of D11 and D9

Regression Equation:

Billet Rating = 7.29 - 2.30(Designator,13XX=1 x Flying=1/Nonflying=0)
- 2.95(East or West=1, Otherwise=0)
+ .90(Operational=1/Technical=0)
- 1.08(Specialty=1/Subspec=0) + .17(Best Time)

In performing the second multiple regression analysis using the "Worst" billet attributes, it was found that the independent variables did not have a consistent relationship with the variance in "Billet Rating" during the stepwise procedure. Therefore, interactive variables were created to account for the suppressive or moderator effects that were present. The new variables computed were: D102, (D10 x D2); D112, (D11 x D2); D107, (D10 x D7); and D117 (D11 x D7). Table 10 lists the zero-order correlations between the rating of the next billet and the timeliness and dummy variables.

The fitted multiple regression equation using the "Worst" billet attributes is shown in Table 11. Results are still highly significant, but the adjusted R square value shows that the equation explains only 19 percent of the variance in the dependent variable "Billet Rating." Other than "Best Time," all the other variables in the equation are associated with the aviation community designator.

Sources of Information Used in Determining Availability of Billet Assignments

Table 12 summarizes by frequency and percentage the information sources used by the officer respondents in determining available billet assignments. The source most frequently cited was the Detailer, mentioned by 78.4 percent of the survey population. Members of the respondents' Peer Group attained the runner-up position by being mentioned on 45 percent of the questionnaires. These were followed in order by Another Senior Officer (25.4 percent), the Officer Billet Summary (23.5 percent),

Table 10

Zero-Order Correlations Between Rating of Next Billet and Variables Used in the "Worst" Billet Multiple Regression Analysis

Dependent Variable: Billet Rating	
Independent Variables	Simple r
Best Time	0.14
D2	0.17
D7	-0.05
D10	0.27
D11	-0.34
D112*	0.06
D117*	-0.21
D119*	0.09
D102*	0.09
D107*	0.07

* Interactive Variables:

D112 = D11 x D2
D117 = D11 x D7
D119 = D11 x D9
D102 = D10 x D2
D107 = D10 x D7

See Table 7 for an explanation of the dummy variables.

Table 11

Results of Multiple Regression Analysis
Using "Worst" Billet Attributes as
Independent Variables and Rating of
Next Billet as Dependent Variable

Multiple R	0.47431	
R Square	0.22497	
Adjusted R Square	0.19301	$F(4,97) = 7.03907$, $p<.001$
Standard Error	1.80683	

Variables in the Regression Equation

Variable*	B	BETA	STD ERROR B	F
D11	-1.487780	-0.32795	0.43444	11.728
Best Time	0.242721	0.22588	0.09801	6.133
D119**	5.656961	0.27848	2.09043	7.323
D117***	-2.799215	-0.27148	1.11537	6.298
(Constant)	6.930988			

* Variables are defined in Table 7.

** Interactive Variable which explains the joint effect of D11 and D9.

*** Interactive Variable which explains the joint effect of D11 and D7.

Regression Equation:

Billet Rating = 6.93 - 1.49(13XX = 1, Otherwise = 0)
+ .24(Best Time)
+ 5.66(Designator;13XX=1 x Flying=1/Nonflying=0)
- 2.80(Designator;13XX=1 x Spec=1/Subspec=0)

Table 12

Frequency of Information Sources Used
in Determining Available Billet Assignments

Information Source	N	% of Population
Navy Times	10	9.8
Officer Personnel Newsletter	23	22.5
Officer Billet Summary	24	23.5
Commanding Officer	8	7.8
Another Senior Officer	26	25.4
Career Planning Guidebook	19	18.6
Detailer	80	78.4
Peer Group	46	45.0
Other*	22	21.5
	102	

* Those officers who filled in the "Other" space on the questionnaire listed at least one of the following as sources: Naval Postgraduate School Faculty members, Supply Corps Directory, AEDO Newsletter, 1630 Newsletter, CEC Directory, Supply Newsletter, Subspecialty Billet List, "Civilians in Washington," "my next billet's incumbent," "rumors," "self-determination," and "personal experience."

the Officer Personnel Newsletter (22.5 percent), the "Other" category (21.5 percent - discussed below), the Career Planning Guidebook (18.6 percent), Navy Times (9.8 percent), and Commanding Officer (7.8 percent).

Those officers who filled in the "Other" space on the questionnaire form listed at least one of the following as sources: Naval Postgraduate School Faculty members, Supply Corps Directory, AEDO Newsletter, 1630 Newsletter, CEC Directory, Supply Newsletter, Subspecialty Billet List, "Civilians in Washington," "my next billet's incumbent," "rumors," "self-determination," and "personal experience."

Perceived Relative Importance of Career Milestones

As mentioned previously, the data collected in survey question Number 7 was prepared for analysis through what is called the Ford algorithm. The characteristics of the Ford procedure make it especially appropriate for obtaining judgments on several alternatives or items from a diverse group of judges (Arima & Mister, 1972). Thus, it was particularly useful in determining the perceived relative importance of the career milestones evaluated by the respondents to this survey.

The Ford procedure is based on forming a "win-loss" matrix, $A = (a_{ij})$, where a_{ij} represents the number of times object i is preferred over object j by the judges.

Table 13 shows the "win-loss" matrix for the rankings of the various milestones made by the survey population. When one reads across the table horizontally, he or she is reading the number of times the row milestone was preferred to any column milestone.

Table 13

"Win-Loss" Matrix for Milestones Ranked
by Overall Survey Population
(No. of respondents = 102)

Milestones	Matrix*											
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	Total Wins	Win** %
(1) Operational Duty Experience	0	29	31	30	52	54	58	66	57	6	383	(65.6)
(2) XO/CO Screen	36	0	28	32	45	50	55	54	52	7	359	(71.4)
(3) Command	42	32	0	38	50	51	57	57	59	7	393	(69.4)
(4) Promotion w/Year Group	47	31	35	0	66	60	65	62	67	8	441	(71.1)
(5) Postgraduate Education	30	21	26	24	0	64	58	63	65	7	358	(56.5)
(6) Subspecialty Designation	16	13	18	19	12	0	48	43	47	6	222	(39.3)
(7) Service College Education	11	3	12	10	15	19	0	38	50	3	161	(28.8)
(8) Staff Duty Experience	4	5	10	10	13	20	31	0	41	3	137	(24.8)
(9) Retirement	11	7	7	7	12	17	17	22	0	3	103	(18.7)
(10) Other	4	5	6	7	10	7	9	9	8	0	65	(56.5)
TOTAL LOSSES	201	146	173	177	275	342	398	414	446	50		

* When one reads across the table horizontally, he or she is reading the number of times the row milestone was preferred to any column milestone. When one reads down vertically, he or she is reading the number of times the column milestone lost to the row milestone.

** WIN % = TOTAL WINS/TOTAL WINS + TOTAL LOSSES

For instance, Command (i.e., row 3) was favored over (i.e., won over) Postgraduate Education (column 5) a total of 50 times (i.e., by 50 of the respondents). When one reads down the columns vertically, he or she is reading the number of times the column milestone "lost" to the row milestone. The right hand column gives the total wins for each milestone, while the bottom row shows total losses. The win percentages are in parentheses next to the total wins column. These are computed by dividing total wins by total wins plus total losses.

(For information, the following is a listing of the "Other" milestones written in by respondents. The number in parentheses following each of these indicates the number of officers who listed them as a milestone: Promotion ahead of year group (5), Flag Selection (1), SWO School (4), Doctorate Degree (1), Warfare Specialty Designator (1), Satisfying jobs in the Navy (1), Nuclear Engineer Qual (1), Disassociated Sea Tour (1), "To make a contribution to the Navy" (1), and "To enter business after retirement" (1).)

Another aspect of the Ford procedure is that it determines a final weight for each ranked item that provides the maximum likelihood of creating the win-loss matrix. The final weights (rescaled for the interval 0.0 to 1.0) assigned to the milestone rankings of the overall sample are depicted on the interval scale in Figure 9. Those milestones with the highest win percentages, XO/CO Screen, Promotion with Year Group, Command, and Operational Duty Experience are at the top of the scale. Those with the lowest win percentages, Subspecialty Designation,

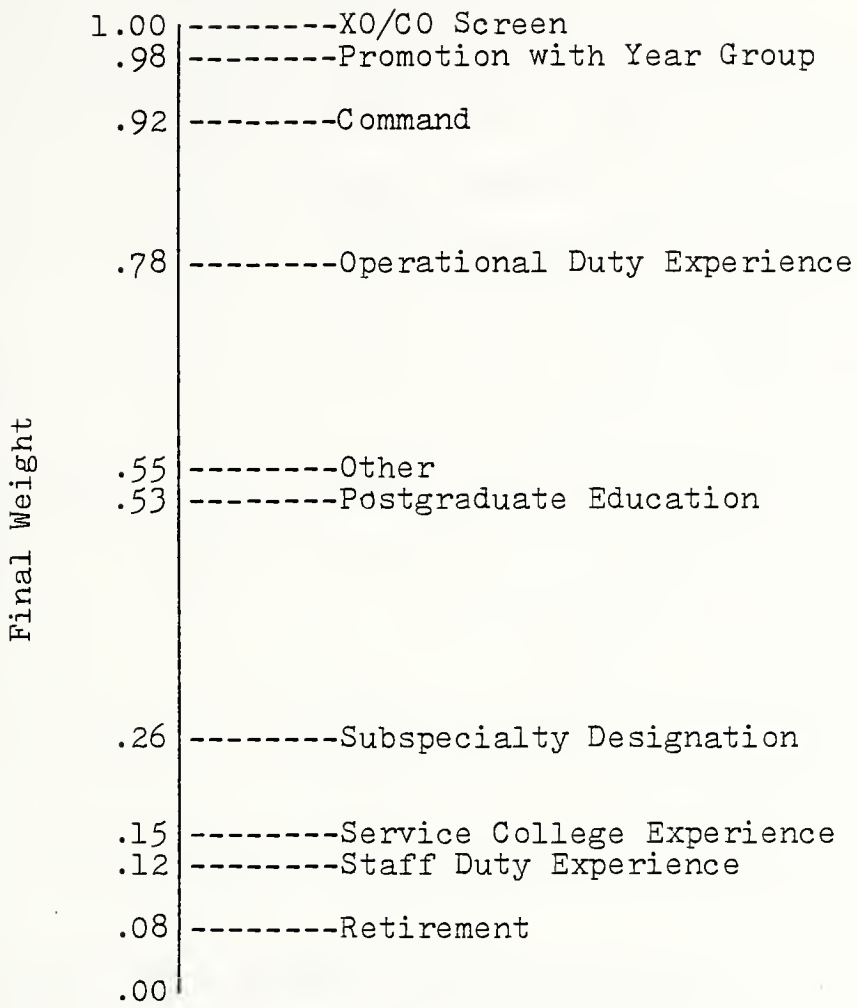


Figure 9. Interval Scale of Milestone Priorities for the Overall Survey Population

Service College Education, Staff Duty Experience, and Retirement are at the bottom of the scale. Converging near the center of the scale are Postgraduate Education and Other.

The procedure used to determine the milestone interval scale for the overall population was repeated to analyze the priorities of the two largest Designator samples in the population, 1110s and 13XXs. The resulting scales are pictured in Figure 10. Similarly, Figure 11 shows the scales for the Lieutenants and the LCDR/CDRs in the survey population.

Table 14 lists the total responses obtained from survey question Number 8. The left hand column lists the following milestones: Postgraduate Education, Subspecialty Designation, Promotion with Year Group, Service College Education, XO/CO Screen, Command, Operational Duty Experience, Staff Duty Experience, Retirement, and Other. Within the table are the total numbers of milestones attained by the respondents broken down by rank and designator.

Assessment of the Placement/Assignment Process

Figure 12 depicts the respondents' evaluation of the "triad" of Navy detailing and of the overall Placement/Assignment Process. The upper three circles show by percentage the responses to survey question Numbers 9, 10, and 11. The left-most circle represents to what extent the officers thought their "personal desires" were considered; the center circle represents to what extent the officers felt their "career needs" were taken into account; and, the right-hand circle represents to what extent the officers felt the "needs of the Navy" influenced their

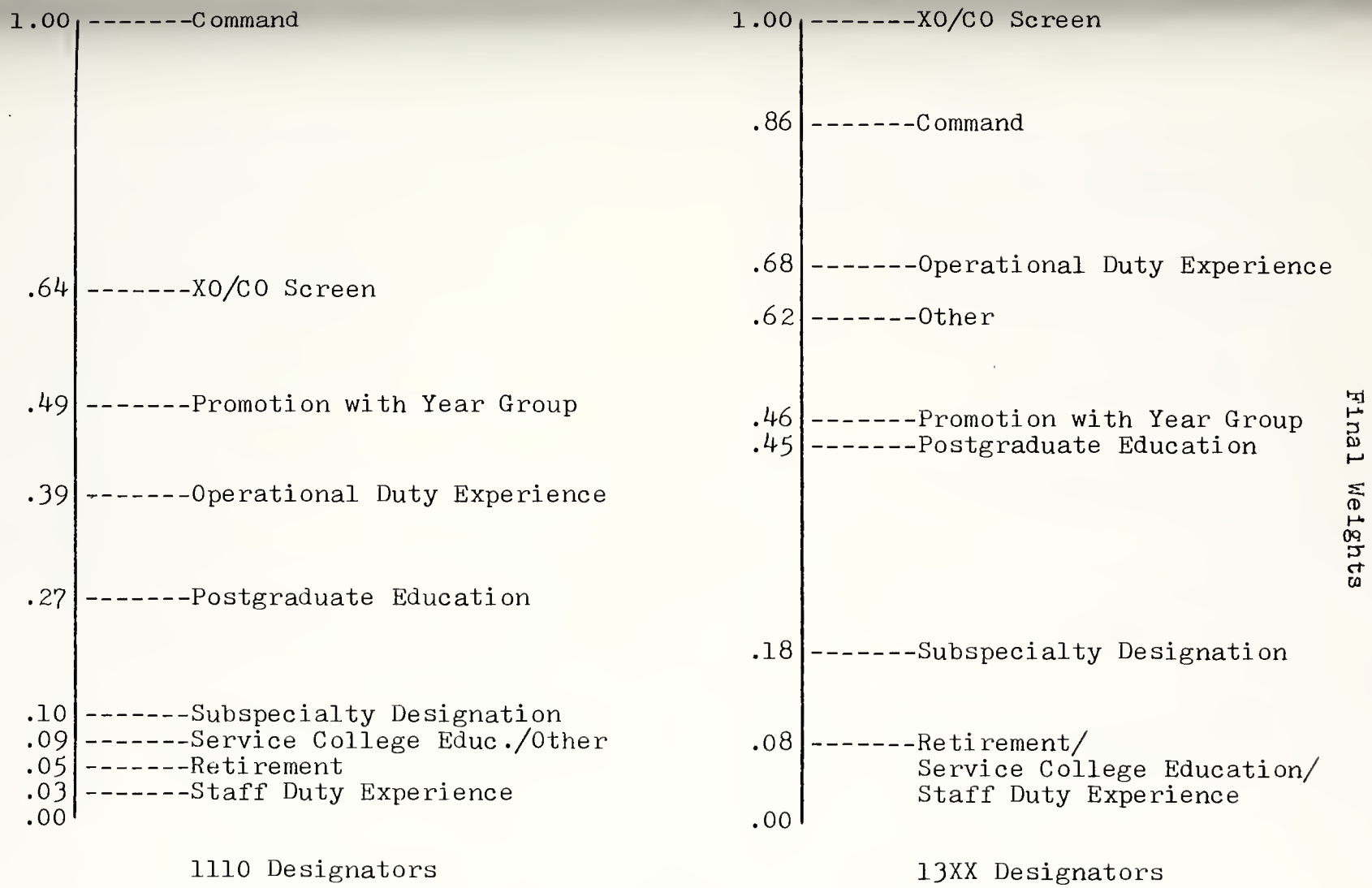


Figure 10. Milestone Interval Scales for 1110 and 13XX Designator Communities

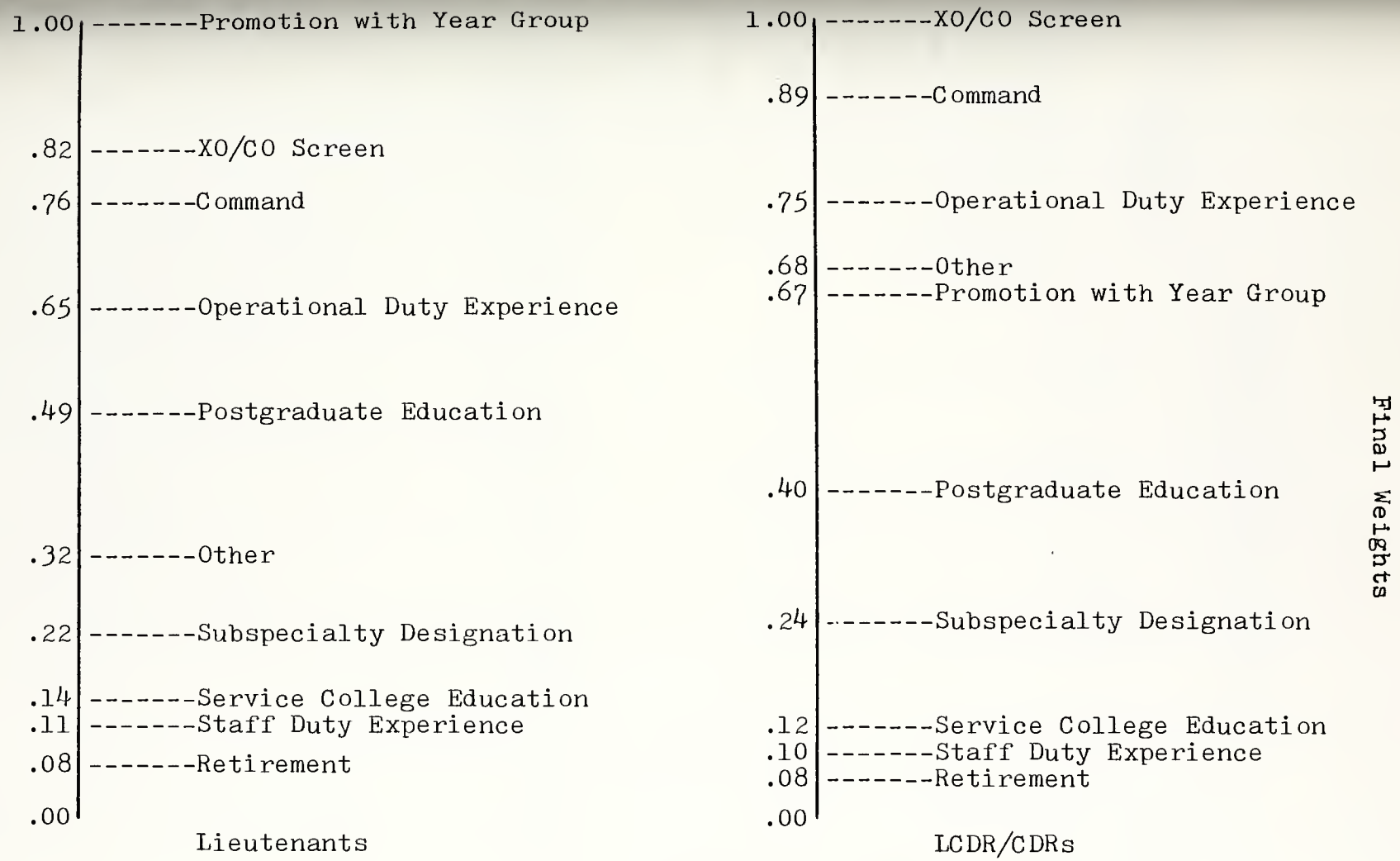


Figure 11. Milestone Interval Scales for Lieutenants and LCDR/CDRs

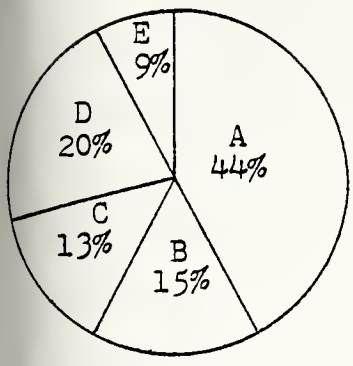
Table 14

Milestones Already Attained
(by Rank and Designator)

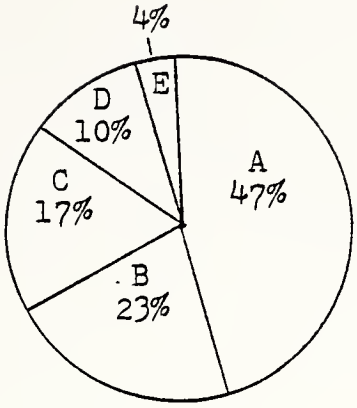
Milestones Attained	LT			LCDR/CDR		
	1110	13XX	OTHER	1110	13XX	OTHER
Postgraduate Educ.	19	17	30	12	12	12
Subspecialty Desig.	5	6	11	5	6	3
Promotion w/YG	15	12	23	12	11	9
Service Coll. Educ.	2	0	3	2	0	2
XO/CO Screen	1	0	0	7	0	3
Command	0	0	0	6	0	0
Oper. Duty Exp.	16	16	17	9	12	7
Staff Duty Exp.	5	2	8	7	2	5
Retirement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other*	0	0	1	2	2	1

* Milestones listed by respondents in "Other" category included Nuclear Eng. Qual, SWO Qual, Warfare Specialty Desig., Destroyer School, and "satisfying jobs."

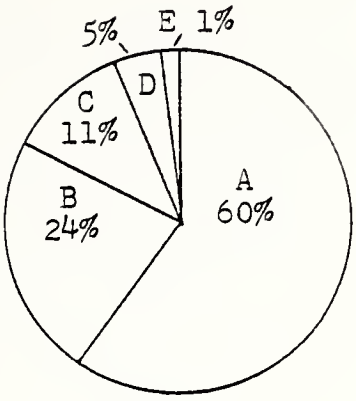
Personal Desires



Career Needs

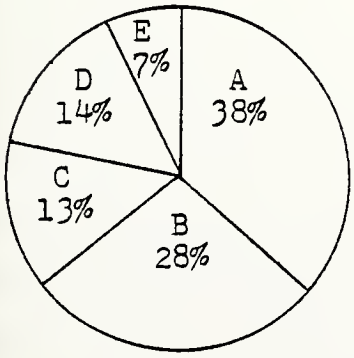


Needs of the Navy



Legend
A= To a great extent
B= To some extent
C= To an average extent
D= To a little extent
E= To no extent

Overall Satisfaction



Legend
A= Very satisfied
B= Satisfied
C= Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
D= Dissatisfied
E= Very dissatisfied

Figure 12. Respondents' evaluation (by percentage of overall population) of the "triad" of Navy detailing and the overall Placement/ Assignment Process

particular assignment. Each circle is partitioned into five sections with section A = To a great extent, B = To some extent, C = To an average extent, D = To a little extent, and E = To no extent. The lower circle depicts the responses to survey question Number 12, which asked the respondents to signify their satisfaction with the overall process that preceded their billet assignment. Sixty-six percent of the officers were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied," twenty-one percent were "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied," while thirteen percent had no strong feelings one way or the other.

To obtain an indication of the satisfaction expressed toward the placement/assignment process within Designator communities at various career stages, Figure 13 was prepared. The horizontal axis measures Years of Commissioned Service, broken down into three categories: less than 7 years, 7-10 years, and greater than 10 years. The sample sizes of officers in these categories, and concurrently in the three Designator communities considered (1110, 13XX, and Other), are the same as used in Table 2. The vertical axis shows the relative frequency of officers who indicated that they were satisfied with the overall placement/assignment process. These percentages were computed for each designator group by adding the number of "very satisfied" and "satisfied" responses and dividing this total by the total number of responses.

Some caution must be taken when interpreting the results since the data represent only cross-sectional approximations of what is regarded here to be essentially longitudinal phenomena (Maanen and Katz, 1976). However, it appears that satisfaction within

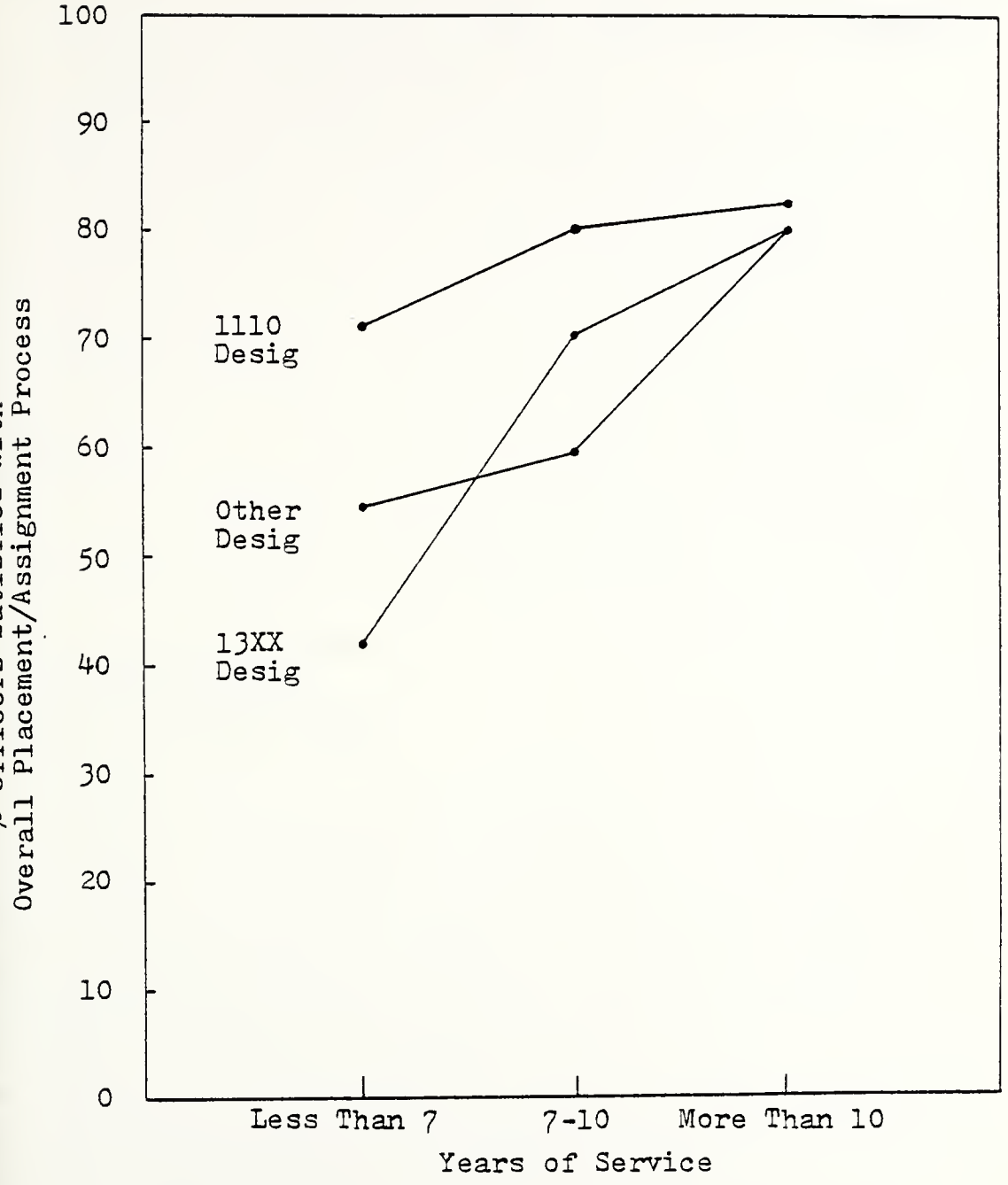


Figure 13. Overall Satisfaction (by Designator Groups and Years of Service) with Placement/Assignment Process

each of the Designator groups grows higher at the more advanced career stages, and the differences which are evident at the "less than 7 years" and "7-10 years" career stages tend to converge once the officers pass the 10 year point.

Table 15 lists the means and standard deviations of the scores obtained from the Likert-type attitude scale used in survey question Numbers 9, 10, and 11. The left hand column lists the variables which make up the triad of Navy detailing; i.e., Personal Desires, Career Needs, and Needs of the Navy. Respondents were asked to what extent they thought each of these variables were taken into account during the Placement/Assignment Process preceding their next billet assignment. The numerical values of the possible choices were as follows:

1 = To a great extent
2 = To some extent
3 = To an average extent
4 = To a little extent
5 = To no extent

To determine the relative importance of factors contributing to the overall satisfaction (with the detailing process) scores obtained in survey question Number 12, a multiple regression analysis was performed using the SPSS stepwise procedure. As in the earlier regression analysis, the regression was stopped when inclusion of a new variable did not provide a significant increment in the explanation of total variance in the dependent variable, "Overall Satisfaction." The independent variables used were "Billet Rating," "Personal Desires," "Career Needs," "Needs of the Navy," several dummy variables representing the categorical Rank and Designator data, and six interactive variables. The

Table 15

Mean Scores of Evaluation of the "Triad" of Navy Detailing (by Designator)

Variables		Designator			
		1110	13XX	OTHER	ALL
Personal Desires	Mean	1.87	3.04	2.31	2.36
	S.D.	1.19	1.60	1.35	1.44
	N	31	28	43	102
Career Needs	Mean	1.52	2.48	2.09	2.02
	S.D.	.85	1.25	1.25	1.19
	N	31	28	43	102
Needs of the Navy	Mean	1.48	1.70	1.71	1.64
	S.D.	.81	1.06	.94	.94
	N	31	28	43	102

coded data for the dummy variables and a description of the interactive variables are shown in Table 16.

Table 17 shows the zero-order correlations between all the variables used in the multiple regression analysis. Table 18 shows the fitted multiple regression equation obtained in this procedure. As suggested by the adjusted R square value, 69 percent of the variance in "Overall Satisfaction with Placement/ Assignment Process" is explained by the equation. The independent variable which explains the greatest amount of variance is "Personal Desires," which was followed into the equation by "Career Needs" and "Billet Rating."

Thirty-six percent of the survey population took the opportunity to make a statement in response to survey question Number 13, the only open-ended one on the questionnaire. Several of the comments have already been mentioned throughout the course of this analysis. The remainder are listed by Designator community in Appendix E. Preceding each comment will be the respondent's rank, the billet rating (B. R.) he gave his next assignment, and a code number which indicates his overall satisfaction (O. S.) with the placement/assignment process. The code numbers to be used are the same as on the questionnaire: 1 = Very satisfied, 2 = Satisfied, 3 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 4 = Dissatisfied, and 5 = Very dissatisfied.

Table 16

Interactive Variables and Coded Data for Dummy Variables Used in Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Overall Satisfaction with Placement/Assignment Process

Descriptors	Dummy Variables*		
	D1	D2	D9
Designator 13XX	1	0	
Designator Other	0	1	
Designator 1100	0	0	
Rank: Lieutenant			1
Rank: LCDR/CDR			0

Interactive Variables:

D3 = D1 x Personal Desires**
D4 = D1 x Career Needs**
D5 = D1 x Needs of the Navy**
D6 = D2 x Personal Desires
D7 = D2 x Career Needs
D8 = D2 x Needs of the Navy

* Dummy variables in this table should not be confused with those defined in Table 7.

** The variables: Personal Desires, Career Needs, and Needs of the Navy are defined and discussed in Figures 6 and 12.

Table 17

Zero-Order Correlations Between Overall Satisfaction (with Placement/Assignment Process) and Independent Variables Used in Multiple Regression Analysis

Variables	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)***
(1) Overall Satis.	.77	.72	-.07	.17	.06	.39	.33	.09	.36	.35	.02	.16	.61
(2) Personal Desires		.65	-.15	.26	.00	.52	.38	.09	.33	.19	-.05	.08	.49
(3) Career Needs			.08	.24	.06	.37	.48	.27	.27	.45	.02	.08	.56
(4) Needs of the Navy				.02	.09	-.08	.09	.36	.02	.05	.44	-.11	.11
(5) D1*					-.48	.84	.87	.81	-.39	-.38	-.39	-.01	.36
(6) D2*						-.41	-.42	-.39	.82	.79	.82	.04	-.03
(7) D3**							.88	.58	-.33	-.32	-.33	.02	.45
(8) D4**								.77	-.34	-.33	-.34	.04	.49
(9) D5**									-.32	-.31	-.32	-.06	.29
(10) D6**										.85	.62	.05	.09
(11) D7**											.63	.04	.13
(12) D8**												.01	.02
(13) D9*													.02
(14) Billet Rating													

* D1, D2, and D9 are defined in Table 16.

** Interactive Variables: D3 = D1 x Personal Desires; D6 = D2 x Personal Desires; D4 = D1 x Career Needs; D7 = D2 x Career Needs; D5 = D1 x Needs of the Navy; D8 = D2 x Needs of the Navy

*** Signs on Billet Rating correlations are reversed from those on SPSS printout because Billet Rating was scored on a scale of 1 to 10 whereas, the other variables were scored on a scale of 5 to 1.

Table 18

Results of Multiple Regression Analysis of Overall Satisfaction (with Placement/Assignment Process) with Rank, Designator, Billet Rating and "Triad of Navy Detailing" Variables

Multiple R	0.83787	
R Square	0.70202	$F(3,98) = 76.962$, $p<.001$
Adjusted R Square	0.69290	
Standard Error	0.71005	

Variables in the Regression Equation

Variable	B	BETA	STD ERROR B	F
Personal Desires	0.4221135	0.47162	0.06628	40.561
Career Needs	0.3190652	0.29421	0.08411	14.390
Billet Rating	0.1348047	0.21161	0.04334	9.676
(Constant)	1.689458			

* The variables are defined and discussed in Tables 16 and 17.

Regression Equation:

Overall Satisfaction with Placement/Assignment Process
= 1.69 + .42 (Personal Desires) + .32 (Career Needs)
+ .13 (Billet Rating)

DISCUSSION

A major objective of this research was to determine and examine the perceptions of Navy officers regarding the desirability of the various U.S. Navy billet assignments. In meeting this objective, a total of 53 different billets which are described in Appendix B were studied. Most of these billets were evaluated by two or more respondents, thus producing a grand total of 93 billets rated by the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) student officers participating in the survey.

The results showed that a majority of the officers surveyed perceived the next billet assignment as beneficial toward furthering overall career development. The mean billet rating for the entire survey population was 8.11 (on a scale from 1 to 10). The three largest designator groups studied (1110, 13XX, and Other) produced mean billet ratings of 8.9, 7.0, and 8.2, respectively. An analysis of variance conducted on the comparative mean billet ratings of these three communities, broken down by years of commissioned service, showed a statistically significant effect for the designators. This was attributed to the generally low ratings given by 13XXs to the next billet assignment. The designator-by-years of commissioned service interaction likewise produced a significant effect due to the fact that the billet ratings of the more senior aviators and NFOs tended to be higher than those of their junior counterparts.

The total number of billets which received a top rating of 10 was 27. Of the 31 Surface Warfare Officers, 45 percent rated

their next assignment at 10; of the 28 respondents in the 13XX community, 22 percent gave their next assignment the top rating. It was found through multiple regression analysis that the variance in billet ratings was explained mostly by factors associated with the 13XX community. Illustrative of this was the fact that the prospective incumbents of 8 of the 10 billets rated at 5 or below were aviators and NFOs. The 8 billets are described below:

Billet Rating	Designator	NOBC	Billet Title
5	1310	8593	Flight Instructor - Pilot
5	1320	9686	ASW Intelligence Officer
4	1320	*9284	Ship's Navigator
3	1310	3254	Instructor, Academic
3	1310	*8621	Strike Operations Officer
2	1320	*8614	Catapult & Arresting Gear Officer
2	1315	*8620	Air Operations Officer, Afloat
1	1320	*9282	Ship's Electronic Warfare Officer

* Disassociated Sea Tour Billets

The multiple regression analyses performed also showed that the attributes used by the respondents to describe the "best" billet to which they could have been assigned had more of an effect on billet rating than did those attributes used to describe the "worst" billet. This could be interpreted to mean that the overall survey population had a clear perception of those billets which were supposedly "career-enhancing," but could only vaguely identify the characteristics of those billets which might be considered detrimental to career development. Within the 13XX community, however, this was not totally the case. Given the fact that the highest weighted career milestones of the 13XX respondents were XO/CO Screen, Command, and Operational Duty, the following comparison is offered:

Nine of the aviators/NFOs in the survey population had received orders to billets in operational aircraft squadrons. These billets, with each officer's billet rating, are described below:

Billet Rating	NOBC	Type Duty
10	8571	VP Squadron
10	8539	HS Squadron
8	8571	VP Squadron
9	8539	HS Squadron
9	9273	Ass't O-in-C
10	8571	VP Squadron
9	8539	HSL Squadron
8	8538	HC Squadron
10	8538	HM Squadron

The mean billet rating for this group of billets was 9.22.

Eight of the aviators/NFOs surveyed were destined for sea-going billets in other than an operational squadron. Again, these billets, with the accompanying billet ratings, are listed below:

Billet Rating	NOBC	Type Duty
1	9282	USS Ship
8	8506	USS Ship
10	9284	USS Ship
3	8621	USS Ship
2	8620	USS Ship
4	9284	USS Ship
2	8614	USS Ship
8	9260	USS Ship

The mean billet rating for this group was 4.75, but the variance is large.

Thus, it would seem that the 13XXs in this survey population uniformly perceived that an assignment to an operational squadron contributed positively toward the attainment of the career goals of XO/CO Screen and Command, while an assignment to a disassociated sea tour billet received highly mixed evaluations. If it could be assumed that the 13XXs in this survey population were representative

of those in the fleet, it might be concluded that the civilian airlines are not the only factors causing the recent exodus of aviation personnel -- there are some who are deeply dissatisfied with the assignments.

Among those officers in the 1110 community, the career milestone of Command outweighed all others. Of the 31 1110s surveyed, 16 were slated for assignment to the Surface Warfare Officer (SWO) Department Head School in Newport, Rhode Island. Years of commissioned service for this group ranged from 4.6 to 6.4 years; therefore, it can be assumed that all had been selected at the completion of their first sea tour to attend this school. The mean billet rating for this particular billet (NOBC Code 3289) was 9.5. It would, therefore, seem apparent that this particular group of 1110 officers unanimously agreed that assignment to SWO school at this point in time was indeed a proper step in the path to earning a command.

The URL Officer Career Guidebook offers the following advice to 1110s: "For those officers who, for one reason or another, were not selected for the department head course on completion of their first sea tour, there still remains significant opportunity to qualify. Selection is very competitive, but there is always room for the outstanding performer." Unfortunately for the purposes of this report, none of the other 1110 respondents were in the 4 to 7 years of commissioned service group; therefore, a comparison could not be made. However, it is worthy to note that assignment to graduate education at the Naval Postgraduate School and selection for the Department Head School are obviously not independent events.

Eleven of the remaining 1110 officers were slated for duty in billets aboard ship. Average years of commissioned service for this group was 11.2 with a range of 8.8 to 15.8. The applicable billets and the billet ratings assigned by the officers are given below:

Billet Rating	NOBC	Billet Title
8	9274	Operations Officer
8	9065	Staff Operations and Plans
8	9258	Weapons Officer
8	9222	Commanding Officer
8	9362	Ship's Engineer Officer
7	9042	Staff Combat Information Center Officer
9	9228	Executive Officer
9	9228	Executive Officer
10	9228	Executive Officer
10	9228	Executive Officer
10	9222	Commanding Officer

The mean billet rating for this group of billets is 8.6, possibly signifying that each is perceived as a genuine stepping-stone on the path to success in the Surface Navy.

Concerning the other designator groups polled in this survey, the small sample sizes precluded the formulation of any concrete conclusions relating to specific billets; however, as has been shown, perceived differences in the career-enhancing qualities of billets did exist among the officers. It can be assumed that their perceptions were similarly determined by such considerations as whether an officer gets selected for promotion or screened for command could be a function of the particular billet to which he or she has been assigned.

In comparing the perceived importance of career milestones between lieutenants and LCDR/CDRs, the only glaring difference is the fact that lieutenants seem to hold Promotion with Year

Group in higher regard than the Lieutenant Commanders/Commanders. This would tend to show that the lure of that extra half-stripe is indeed a motivating factor in the career aspirations of lieutenants; and that, once the security of that extra half-stripe is attained, an officer's priorities are diverted to bigger and better things.

One milestone which should be discussed further here is Postgraduate Education. The Career Planning Guidebook offers the following advice concerning it: "Graduate education is important to a Naval Officer for a number of reasons. It is becoming increasingly important for professional advancement. It enhances the subspecialty achievement process. It generates an expanded base of expertise in your chosen field that is compatible with the Navy's needs." Indeed, results of the FY79 Commander Selection Board show that 86.4 percent of those officers with some graduate study were selected for Commander compared with 68.2 percent of those with basic degrees. (Navy Times, Jan. 1979) With this in mind, it might seem surprising that Postgraduate Education received a mediocre ranking on each of the interval scales depicted earlier; however, this could be accounted for by the fact that 100 percent of the survey population was in the midst of receiving this education at the time of the survey. Most probably the need or the desire for postgraduate education had been satisfied and was no longer a major factor in the career aspirations of the respondents.

Concerning the sources of information used by the officer respondents in determining available billet assignments, the fact

that the Detailer was listed most frequently should not be surprising, since, as stated in the Unrestricted Line Officer (URL) Career Planning Guidebook, the detailer is "the one source that is able to stay current in both the overall situation as well as each officer's personal case." What might appear surprising though is the fact that a greater percentage of officers used an informal source of information, their Peer Group, rather than the Officer Personnel Newsletter. The lower usage of the Officer Billet Summary could be because it has only recently been rejuvenated as an information source (January, 1978) and is published but once a year. The lower usage of the Officer Personnel Newsletter could be because, as one officer suggested on his questionnaire form, it "arrives too late and out of date."

The following excerpt is quoted from the U.R.L. Career Planning Guidebook: "It is a time-honored tradition that the most appropriate, best qualified, most knowledgeable source of career guidance is a junior officer's commanding officer. As a result of their previous experience and exposure, commanding officers have amassed a wealth of knowledge from which the less experienced junior officer can derive great benefit."

With this in mind, it would, at first glance, seem appalling that only 7.8 percent of the respondents utilized their commanding officer as a source of billet information. However, at the time of this research, the survey population was specifically entrenched in an academic atmosphere where there is obviously little time for personal contact between officer students and the commanding officer of the Naval Postgraduate School. It would hopefully be

safe to assume that if this questionnaire were administered to officers in the "fleet," a much higher percentage would list their C.O. as a source of information.

While none of the questions in this study was specifically designed to solicit the officers' evaluation of the counseling performance of C.O.s, one respondent took it upon himself to offer the following statement: "The Navy doesn't need another impersonal questionnaire! It needs good leadership. If those in authority (i.e., CO's) took the time and were truly interested in officers' careers, they could provide this type of feedback. But, who has time for the important issue of officers' careers? - the truly significant thing in today's Navy is 'flight jacket control.' Ask Admiral Anonymous at Anonymous Naval Air Station - he'll tell you this. He has squadron COs standing gate guard duty to ensure compliance."

The second major objective of this research was to determine and examine the reactions of Naval officers to the Placement/ Assignment (i.e., detailing) Process which precedes all billet assignments. The results of the study show that the majority of officers surveyed is satisfied. In actual figures, 66 percent was satisfied, 21 percent was dissatisfied, and 13 percent was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the overall detailing process preceding the most recent billet assignment.

Concerning the triad of Navy detailing, the majority of respondents felt that its personal and career needs were taken into consideration during the process. Concurrently, most officers reported that the "needs of the Navy" played an important part in determining their ultimate duty station.

Satisfaction with the Placement/Assignment process tends to rise with length of commissioned service; however, this finding must be regarded with some caution since it was based on a cross-sectional approximation of what is considered to be essentially longitudinal phenomena.

It can be reported from written responses that many of the officers in all communities consider the performance of detailers to be commendable. Still, others have criticized detailers for such things as placing too much emphasis on the needs of the Navy, late arriving orders, lapses in memory, disregarding women's career needs, and improper billet assignments. The role of the placement officer in the detailing process was mentioned only infrequently and casually, and the fact that a commanding officer has the "right" to reject an individual from being assigned to his or her command was not considered by any of the respondents. Thus, it can be concluded that the workings of the Placement/Assignment process are not completely understood by all officers. As a result, the detailer can be relegated to the position of "whipping boy" for the system.

The results of the multiple regression analysis performed to determine the factors contributing to a Navy officer's overall satisfaction can be attained if two particular requirements are simultaneously fulfilled: (1) his or her personal needs are considered, and (2) he or she is assigned to a billet which is perceived to be helpful in furthering overall career development. Obviously, the complexities of the detailing system do not always permit the consideration of an officer's personal desires. Thus,

the fulfillment of the first requirement is left to the conscientious efforts of the Navy's detailers and placement officers. The fulfillment of the second requirement is difficult since all available billets are not career-enhancing. Further, the Navy has no effective means to determine how an officer might perceive the career-enhancing quality of a particular billet.

As mentioned at the outset of this report, a specific objective in this research was to develop a viable survey instrument for measuring the perceptions of Naval officers toward billet assignments and the detailing process. It is felt that this objective has been met. The questionnaire developed produced a response rate of 60.3 percent, a figure which is above the standard Navy return rate according to liaison with Naval Personnel R&D Center. The short length of the questionnaire allows it to be efficiently administered, quickly completed by respondents, and expediently analyzed. If distributed on a Navy-wide basis to recipients of PCS orders over a period of several months, it could undoubtedly provide copious amounts of valuable data needed by the Navy to improve its planning and policy decisions.

CONCLUSIONS

The majority of NPS officer students participating in this study felt that its next b llet assignment would benefit overall career development. The average billet rating for the population was 8.11 on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being highest. The variance in the billet ratings was due primarily to the generally low ratings given by the 13XX community.

Members of the overall survey population demonstrated that they have a clear perception of those billets which they consider to be career-enhancing, but cannot consistently specify the characteristics of billets which might be considered detrimental to an officer's career development. Individuals within the aviation community, however, have specifically identified an operational aviation squadron billet to be career-enhancing but were highly ambivalent regarding the utility of a disassociated sea tour billet. Surface Warfare officers have a strong perception that assignment to the Surface Warfare Officer Department Head School is a mandatory steppingstone in the path to earning a command.

The majority of officers surveyed was satisfied with the Placement/Assignment process which preceded the most recent billet assignment and expressed satisfaction with the detailers role in the detailing process. The major factors which related to an officer's satisfaction with the detailing process were fulfillment of his or her personal desires and assignment to a billet which was perceived to promote overall career development.

The conclusions presented here are limited in their generalizability to the extent that they are the perceptions of Naval Postgraduate School students enrolled in the Naval Intelligence, Administrative Science, Operations Research, and Computer Technology curriculums, with very few respondents from the other NPS curricula.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This research was able to uncover the perceptions of only a small portion of Naval officers regarding the relative desirability of billet assignments at a specific point in time along a career path. To determine the perceptions of the entire United States Navy officer corps, it is recommended that the questionnaire developed through this research be distributed to samples on a Navy-wide basis in conjunction with all permanent change of station orders. The sampling should continue over a long period of time.

APPENDIX A

WOULD YOU PLEASE BE KIND ENOUGH TO COMPLETE THE ENCLOSED QUESTIONNAIRE? COPIES OF IT HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO ALL NAVAL OFFICERS AT N.P.S. WHO HAVE RECENTLY RECEIVED OR WILL SOON RECEIVE ORDERS TO A NEW DUTY STATION.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS YOUR VIEWS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF YOUR NEXT BILLET ASSIGNMENT.

YOUR RESPONSES WILL BE USED FOR TWO PURPOSES:

(1). TO HELP FINALIZE A PROPOSED BILLET ASSIGNMENT FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE WHICH MAY SOON BE DISTRIBUTED NAVY-WIDE.

(2). TO HELP COMPLETE A THESIS PROJECT CONCERNING THE NAVY'S ASSIGNMENT SYSTEM AND ITS PERCEIVED IMPACT ON THE CAREER EXPECTATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL OFFICERS.

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL QUESTIONS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE FORM AND RETURN IT TO SMC #1957 IN THE PRE-ADDRESSED RETURN ENVELOPE. ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS YOU MAY CARE TO ENCLOSE WILL MOST CERTAINLY BE WELCOME. PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME, SSN, OR SMC NUMBER.

IF YOU HAVEN'T YET RECEIVED ANY INDICATION OF WHAT YOUR NEW BILLET ASSIGNMENT WILL BE, PLEASE WAIT AND RETURN THE FORM AFTER YOU DO.

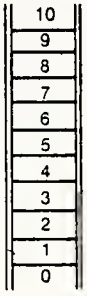
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE.

NOTE: ALL QUESTIONS RELATE TO YOUR NEXT BILLET ASSIGNMENT

1. Below is a picture of a ladder. In regard to furthering your overall career development, suppose the top of the ladder represents the *best possible billet* to which you could have been assigned at this time and the bottom of the ladder represents the *worst possible billet* to which you could have been assigned at this time.

Now, consider the new billet to which you have actually been assigned. Where on the ladder do you feel it belongs? (Please *circle* the number in the appropriate step of the ladder).

Best Possible Billet



Worst Possible Billet

2. Column 1, below, lists several categories which may be used to describe a billet.

In column 2 please select the categories that describe the *best possible billet* to which you could have been assigned at this time. (Place an "X" in the appropriate box(es).) In column 3 please describe the *worst possible* billet.

Column 1 Categories	Column 2 Best Possible Billet	Column 3 Worst Possible Billet
Sea	☐	☐
Shore	☐	☐
Line	☐	☐
Staff	☐	☐
CONUS	☐	☐
Overseas	☐	☐
East/Atlantic Fleet (does *not* include Washington)	☐	☐
Washington	☐	☐
West/Pacific Fleet	☐	☐
Specialty (Includes 1000, 1050 billets)	☐	☐
Subspecialty	☐	☐
Operational	☐	☐
Technical	☐	☐
Flying	☐	☐
Nonflying	☐	☐

3. Pictured below are two ladders exactly like the ladder in Question One.

Please consider now all of the billets that *you thought* were *available to you* for assignment at this time.

Turn your attention to Ladder A. Consider the *best available billet* which you thought was open to you for assignment at this time. Where on the ladder does it belong? (Please *circle* the appropriate step).

Turn your attention to Ladder B. Consider the *worst available billet* which you thought was open to you for assignment at this time. Where on the ladder does it belong? (Please *circle* the appropriate step).

Ladder A

Best Possible Billet

Worst Possible Billet

Ladder B

Best Possible Billet

Worst Possible Billet

4. Column 1, below, lists several categories which may be used to describe a billet.

In column 2 please select the categories that describe the *best available billet* which you thought was open to you for assignment at this time. (Place an "X" in the appropriate box(es).)

In column 3 please select the categories that describe the *worst available billet* that you thought was open to you for assignment at this time. (Place an "X" in the appropriate box(es).)

Column 1 Categories	Column 2 Best Available Billet	Column 3 Worst Available Billet
Sea	☐	☐
Shore	☐	☐
Line	☐	☐
Staff	☐	☐
CONUS	☐	☐
Overseas	☐	☐
East/Atlantic Fleet (does *not* include Washington)	☐	☐
Washington	☐	☐
West/Pacific Fleet	☐	☐
Specialty (Includes 1000, 1050 billets)	☐	☐
Subspecialty	☐	☐
Operational	☐	☐
Technical	☐	☐
Technical	☐	☐
Flying	☐	☐
Nonflying	☐	☐
Service School/Graduate Education (as a student)	☐	☐

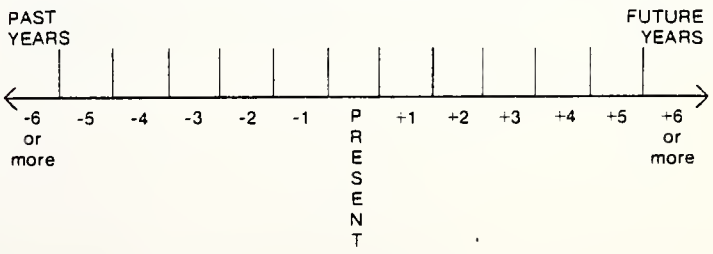
5. Consider again all of the billets that you thought were available to you for assignment at this time. Please indicate below the source(s) of information which enabled you to determine that these billets were available to you. (Place an "X" in the appropriate blank space(s).)

_____ a. Navy Times
_____ b. Officer Personnel Newsletter
_____ c. Officer Billet Summary
_____ d. Your Commanding Officer
_____ e. Another Senior Officer
_____ f. Career Planning Guidebook
_____ g. Your Detailer
_____ h. Your peer group
_____ i. Other _____ (Fill in, if applicable)
_____ j. Other _____

6. The figure below is divided into frames with each frame representing a particular time period. The center frame represents the present time. Those frames to the right of center represent years in the future and those to the left of center represent years in the past.

Assume that the billet which you have been assigned is required for your overall career development or was unavoidable considering the needs of the Navy.

By placing an "X" in the appropriate frame, please indicate the year when it would have been (or would be) most beneficial to your career development to have served (or to serve) in this billet. (Use the *entry date* into the billet to make your judgment). If the present is most appropriate, place your "X" in that frame.



7. Below is a list of "MILESTONES" (i.e. significant events) which a Naval Officer might expect to encounter during his career. In the "PRIORITY" column please indicate in the spaces provided your *personal* priority for reaching each milestone whether you have reached it or not. (Use the number 1 for your first priority, 2 for your second priority, etc.). If you feel that two or more of the milestones have equal priority, use the same number for each. If any of the milestones do not figure in your career plans, place an "X" in the adjoining space.

NOTE: The "MILESTONES ATTAINED" column will be used for answering the *next* question (i.e. Question 8).

PRIORITY	MILESTONES	MILESTONES ATTAINED
a. _____	a. Postgraduate education	a. _____
b. _____	b. Subspecialty designation	b. _____
c. _____	c. Promotion with year group	c. _____
d. _____	d. Service College education	d. _____
e. _____	e. XO/CO screen	e. _____
f. _____	f. Command	f. _____
g. _____	g. Operational Duty experience	g. _____
h. _____	h. Staff Duty experience	h. _____
i. _____	i. Retirement	i. _____
j. _____	j. Other (_____)	j. _____
k. _____	k. Other (_____)	k. _____

8. In the "MILESTONES ATTAINED" column in Question 7, please place an "X" in the appropriate spaces to indicate those milestones which you have already attained.

NOTE: The following questions relate to the Placement/Assignment Process which preceded your next billet assignment.

NOTE: In answering questions 9, 10, and 11 please *circle* one of the following choices:

1. To a great extent
2. To some extent
3. To an average extent
4. To a little extent
5. To no extent

9. To what extent do you feel your "personal desires" were considered?

1 2 3 4 5

10. To what extent do you feel your "career needs" were considered?

1 2 3 4 5

11. To what extent do you feel the "needs of the Navy" influenced your assignment?

1 2 3 4 5

12. What are your feelings toward the entire Placement/Assignment process which resulted in your assignment to your next billet? (Please *circle* your choice).

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied

13. If you would like to elaborate on the choice you made in Question 12, please do so in the space below.

TO HELP CLASSIFY YOUR ANSWERS STATISTICALLY, WOULD YOU PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT YOURSELF?

1. What is your present rank?	1. _____
2. What is your time in grade?	2. Years _____ Months _____
3. How long have you been commissioned?	3. Years _____ Months _____
4. What is your Designator code?	4. _____
5. What is (or will be) your Subspecialty code?	5. _____
6. What is the title of your next billet assignment?	6. _____
7. What is the name of your next Duty Station?	7. _____
8. What is the geographical location of your next Duty Station?	8. _____

YOUR COOPERATION IN COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS GREATLY APPRECIATED. THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND CONSIDERATION.

APPENDIX B

SUMMARY OF BILLETS

0000-0999 Health Care Services

0820 Operations Management Officer, Medical Facility
0915 Nursing Service Administrator

1000-1999 Supply and Fiscal

1055 Fiscal Officer
1520 Inventory Finance Officer
1978 Supply Logistics Officer
1984 Supply Plans Officer

2000-2999 Sciences and Services

2170 Designated Project Support Officer
2605 Administrative Assistant

3000-3999 Personnel

3251 Instructor, Academic (General)
3254 Instructor, Academic (Social Science)
3289 Student Officer
3320 Human Resource Management Officer
3701 General Chaplain
3925 Military Manpower Requirements Control Officer
3943 Manpower Planning Officer
3995 Manpower Survey Officer

4000-4999 Facilities Engineering

4205 Facilities Engineering Officer

5000-5999 Electronics Engineering

(NONE)

6000-6999 Weapons Engineering

(NONE)

7000-7999 Naval Engineering

7996 Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion, and Repair
7998 Combat Systems Superintendent

8000-8999 Aviation

8506 Carrier Airborne Combat Information Center Officer
8538 Helicopter Pilot
8539 Helicopter Antisubmarine Pilot
8571 Patrol Plane Commander, Multiengine Land Plane
8593 Flight Instructor-Pilot, Fleet Operational Aircraft
8614 Catapult & Arresting Gear Officer (General)
8620 Air Operations Officer, Afloat
8621 Strike Operations Officer
8715 Meteorological Officer

9000-9999 Naval Operations

9025 Advisor
9040 Staff Antisubmarine Officer
9042 Staff Combat Information Center Officer
9060 Staff Command and Control Officer
9065 Staff Operations and Plans Officer
9082 Flag Secretary
9222 Commanding Officer, Afloat
9228 Executive Officer, Afloat
9258 Weapons Officer (General)
9260 Tactical Systems Officer
9273 Officer in Charge, Afloat
9274 Operations Officer, Afloat (General)
9282 Ship's Electronic Warfare Officer
9284 Ship's Navigator (General)
9285 Ship's Navigator (Inertial Systems)
9362 Ship's Engineer Officer (General)
9442 Facilities Manager
9510 Communication Officer, Ashore
9595 Communications Traffic Officer
9600 Intelligence Officer
9616 Intelligence Support Officer
9617 Intelligence Investigations Officer
9686 Antisubmarine Warfare Intelligence Officer
9852 Direct Support Officer, Naval Security Group (Air)
9965 Inspector, Technical

TOTAL: 53 Billets

APPENDIX C

NUMERICAL LISTING OF BILLETS BY BILLET RATING ASSIGNED IN QUESTION 1.

RATING: 10

NOBC	BILLET TITLE
1978	(2)Supply Logistics Officer
*1984	Supply Plans Officer
2605	Administrative Assistant
*3289	(11)Student Officer
3320	Human Resource Management Officer
3995	Manpower Survey Officer
*8538	Helicopter Pilot
*8539	Helicopter Antisubmarine Pilot
*8571	(2)Patrol Plane Commander, Multiengine Land Plane
*9222	Commanding Officer, Afloat
*9228	(2)Executive Officer, Afloat
*9258	Weapons Officer (General)
*9274	Operations Officer, Afloat (General)
*9284	(2)Ship's Navigator (General)
9510	Communications Officer, Ashore
*9600	Intelligence Officer

RATING: 9

*1520	Inventory Finance Officer
*1984	Supply Plans Officer
*3251	Instructor, Academic (General)
*3289	(3)Student Officer
7996	Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion, and Repair
*8539	(2)Helicopter Antisubmarine Pilot
9040	Staff Antisubmarine Officer
9060	Staff Command and Control Officer
*9228	(2)Executive Officer, Afloat
9273	Officer in Charge, Afloat
9285	Ship's Navigator (Inertial Systems)
*9600	Intelligence Officer
9852	Direct Support Officer, Naval Security Group (Air)

NOTE 1: THOSE BILLETS DENOTED BY AN ASTERISK HAVE BEEN RANKED UNDER TWO OR MORE DIFFERENT BILLET RATINGS.

NOTE 2: IN PARENTHESES IS THE NUMBER OF OFFICERS WHO RANKED THAT PARTICULAR BILLET. AN ABSENCE OF PARENTHESES INDICATES ONLY ONE OFFICER.

RATING: 8

NOBC	BILLET TITLE
*1055	Fiscal Officer
*1520	Inventory Finance Officer
*1978	Supply Logistics Officer
*3289	Student Officer
3943	Manpower Planning Officer
4205	Facilities Engineering Officer
7998	Combat Systems Superintendent
8506	Carrier Airborne Combat Information Center Officer
*8538	Helicopter Pilot
*8571	Patrol Plane Commander, Multiengine Land Plane
9065	Staff Operations and Plans Officer
9082	Flag Secretary
*9222	Commanding Officer, Afloat
*9258	Weapons Officer (General)
9260	(2)Tactical Systems Officer
*9274	Operations Officer, Afloat (General)
9362	Ship's Engineer Officer (General)
*9600	Intelligence Officer
9617	Intelligence Investigations Officer
9965	Inspector, Technical

RATING: 7

0915	Nursing Service Administrator
*1055	Fiscal Officer
2170	Designated Project Support Officer
*3251	(2)Instructor, Academic (General)
*3289	Student Officer
3925	Military Manpower Requirements Control Officer
8715	(2)Meteorological Officer
9025	Advisor
9042	Staff Combat Information Center Officer
9442	Facilities Manager
9616	Intelligence Support Officer

RATING: 6

9595	Communications Traffic Officer
*9600	Intelligence Officer

RATING:	5
NOBC	BILLET TITLE
0820	Operations Management Officer, Medical Facility
8593	Flight Instructor-Pilot, Fleet Operational Aircraft
9686	Antisubmarine Warfare Intelligence Officer
RATING:	4
*9284	Ship's Navigator (General)
RATING:	3
3254	Instructor, Academic (Social Science)
3701	General Chaplain
8621	Strike Operations Officer
RATING:	2
8614	Catapult & Arresting Gear Officer (General)
8620	Air Operations Officer, Afloat
RATING:	1
9282	Ship's Electronic Warfare Officer

APPENDIX D

Billet Rating: 10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
(2)1978	1520	1055	0915	9595	0820	9284	3254	8614	9282
1984	1984	1520	1055	9600	8593		3701	8620	
2605	3251	1978	2170		9686		8621		
(11)3289	(3)3289	3289	(2)3251						
3320	7996	3943	3289						
3995	(2)8539	4205	3925						
8538	9040	7998	(2)8715						
8539	9060	8506	9025						
(2)8571	(2)9228	8538	9042						
9222	9273	8571	9442						
(2)9228	9285	9065	9616						
9258	9600	9082							
9274	9852	9222							
(2)9284		9258							
9510		(2)9260							
9600		9274							
		9362							
		9600							
		9617							
		9965							

TOTAL: 93

APPENDIX E

RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS ON PLACEMENT/ASSIGNMENT PROCESS

1110 DESIGNATOR

RANK	O.S.	B.R.	COMMENT
LT	1	10	"Surface Line is Mighty Fine."
LT	2	8	"All the liaison and coordination work was done by myself. Had I not precipitated my assignment selection, I would have had to wait until immediately prior to my departure from Naval Postgraduate School. I assume 6 months notice (orders in hand), which the pilot detailers seem able to achieve is possible for the Surface Warfare Officer, too. I'm still waiting (4 months to go)."
LCDR	3	8	"I'm completely convinced that getting a desired assignment is pure luck - i.e., being in the right place at the right time. Policies change so haphazardly that it is impossible to tell if the billets handed out are 'enhancing' or merely putting a body in a job."
CDR	1	10	"My high satisfaction stems from the fact that my assignment was determined by a boarding process and that I could anticipate my assignment as a result of the outcome."
LCDR	1	10	"With the exception of my first assignment I have been ordered to my first choice in all respects. From this standpoint I would find it difficult to criticize the placement process. Those who do have possibly not been made aware of how they 'stack up' against their peers. The 'needs of the Navy' is a convenient excuse to keep from telling officers where they actually stand."
CDR	4	6	"Have attained my personal milestones, and strongly did not desire duty in Washington area...I had no choice (i.e., was offered no other option by detailer)."
LT	2	10	"Going from PG School to the Department Head Course, I've really been in 'automatic', without much interaction with my detailer. In the past, however, I've found the detailers to be reasonably attentive to my professional and personal needs."

1110 DESIGNATOR (CONTINUED)

RANK	O.S.	B.R.	COMMENT
LCDR	2	7	"Detailer needs to be more personable and improve 'lead-time' for slating to 6 months before rotation date. Orders should be in hand at least 2 months before retation."
LT	4	8	"No one individual (i.e., detailer) should hold an individual's career development in his hand, regardless of the needs of the Navy."
LT	4	7	"Although I am not totally dissatisfied with the billet assignment, I am dissatisfied with the process which was used. My assignment was based solely on the needs of the Navy. My detailer put it this way: 'There were no other alternatives'."

1310 DESIGNATOR

LCDR	2	10	"Satisfied with type of duty. Not satisfied with location."
LT	5	3	"There was little regard for my personal choice and the needs of the Navy was put first, as admitted by the detailer. Have no idea what the next detailer's priorities will be nor how long to expect to be out of the cockpit and am not comfortable thinking of the possibility of 3 tours out of cockpit of primary aircraft."
LCDR	1	8	"I feel the Bureau gave me my first choice because they had a need to fill the job and it coincides with my personal desires. If they had a higher priority, I feel they would have used 'career' excuses to entice me. I'm sure a shipboard staff would have been more beneficial in some people's eyes, but I wouldn't be in the Navy today if I had to work outside the VP community."
LT	1	7	"The next assignment is atypical. In most of the previous assignments my choices would have been very different. In simple terms, I feel that I have the most desirable orders in my career to date, but it was realized more by 'right place - right time' than by any quantitative or qualitative process by the assignment personnel."

1310 DESIGNATOR (CONTINUED)

RANK	O.S.	B.R.	COMMENT
LT	5	8	"The entire system of assignment needs revamping for aviators. I was forced into an overseas assignment at a TSC due to the necessity to meet my 12 year gate of flying. The current officer planning guide presents a 'typical' career pattern for an aviator. I have followed the career pattern and find myself in a bind to meet my 12 year gate and to get back to a squadron in time as a LCDR prior to command screening. If aviators in the future are required to have a disassociated sea tour: (1) the 12 year gate requirements should be changed, (2) if departing from Naval Postgraduate School, should go directly to a payback tour where their newly acquired skills can best be utilized rather than wait until they have forgotten them. The Navy should require an immediate payback tour for all Navy NPS graduates as do all the other services. A lot of educational talent is wasted due to a lack of timely utilization of newly educated officers."
LCDR	2	8	"My year group is unusually large and the number of operational billets relatively small. I have some personal family circumstances which I feel should have had more influence upon my ultimate assignment, however, were not. I am fairly satisfied with my assignment. I don't feel the detailers adversely affected my assignment. The problem was the relative inflexibility of the 'needs of the Navy' constraint upon the issuance process."
LCDR	2	5	"It seems that there has been a marked change in detailers' treatment of officers in the past 3 months. Coming to NPS I had orders only 10 days before the start of classes. Prior to my sea duty tour I had about 3 days notice. This time I have written orders in hand 5 months in advance. However, I still have the feeling that I have been manipulated by the detailers. Seems that they always offer the worst possible orders, then offer you what they need to fill - that way it's your choice."
LT	2	7	"I got my first choice."

1320 DESIGNATOR

RANK	O.S.	B.R.	COMMENT
LT	2	8	"I wasn't given any options to select from but, it appears that my detailer is placing me in a good job. I'm almost an O-4 and the job is an O-5 job. So, I hope I'm capable of doing it well. I'm satisfied because my past and present orders are good ones. If I get a bad set in the future I won't be too pleased."
LT	4	2	"With exodus of qualified flight personnel and discussion of need for flight personnel in the fleet, it is almost beyond comprehension why I'm being assigned a ship's company tour."
LT	2	8	"While my preference for another shore duty tour was not satisfied, my highest preference for sea duty was assigned."
LT	4	9	"My assignment to my next billet occurred only after a senior officer in BUPERS took a personal interest in my situation. The sea duty detailer had tried to 'sell me' on a billet I specifically told him I did not want. Despite my request, he recommended me for the billet. The recommendation was rejected, and I was given to the subspecialty detailer for assignment. The subspecialty detailer gave me an outstanding billet assignment, and kept me completely informed throughout. My answers to Question 9-12 relate to the fact that it took personal liaison with a senior officer in BUPERS to keep from getting 'screwed'."

1100 DESIGNATOR

LT	3	6	"I want to go to sea (and I feel I need to for my career), but since the Navy is moving so slowly on sending women to sea (only 3 female LT's so far, according to my detailer), sea duty wasn't even considered in my case."

1100 DESIGNATOR (CONTINUED)

RANK	O.S.	B.R.	COMMENT
LT	4	10	"I am very satisfied with my next assignment, however, I believe that the detailers, placement officers, and others who make decisions about assignments for women give little, if any, thought whatsoever to career progression of women. When it comes right down to assignments, it seems that we females just sort of take what is available at the time, unless as many of us do, we find our own jobs and then just ask for them. Overall, I have always gotten very close to exactly what I wanted for duty assignments, but I just feel that it was all up to me."
LCDR	4	7	"Career paths for women are shaky at best or unknown. 1110s detailing 1100s does not appear to be working."

1130 DESIGNATOR

LCDR	1	8	"I knew what I wanted and got it. I am in the 1130 community and because of such a small community, detailing is easier for those who do their own career planning."

1630 DESIGNATOR

LT	4	8	"I'm dissatisfied, but things may change for LCDR, CDR billeting."
LT	5	6	"While I got the assignment I wanted it took considerable effort on my part to convince the detailer that sea duty was in my best interests after P.G. School. After telling me 6 months previously that I needed to go to sea to remain current for promotion, he detailed me originally to a joint shore tour in Washington, D.C. - I was upset!!"

1800 DESIGNATOR (CONTINUED)

RANK	O.S.	B.R.	COMMENT
LT	3	7	"There are very few billets available in my specialty (Restricted Line). Because of this, the needs of the Navy are the overwhelming factor in assignments. Personal desires are rarely considered."
LT	4	7	"Detailer and placement officer told me that I have the best service record of all LT's in my designator, so instead of placing the best people in the fleet (where we need them), I've been assigned to a training command."
LT	3	7	"I happened to ask for a billet which was available and not too many of my peers wanted."

2300 DESIGNATOR

LT	4	5	"Detailers were changed in mid-stream of order negotiation process. As a result, orders promised by outgoing detailer were given to someone else. New detailer then refused to negotiate based on prior promises. Final orders were neither considered nor offered by the detailer."
LT	5	8	"Changed my orders three times. First change was because the detailer 'forgot' he had detailed me. Absolutely no input into type of duty or location on the second change of orders. It required a senior officer to intercede on my behalf in order to finally get the situation resolved."

3100 DESIGNATOR

LCDR	1	8	"I plan on retiring from my next job. The job will give me a good opportunity to find a good second job."
LT	3	9	"I was not given a choice of assignments. The billet is new and I was told that I was the only person qualified for it. The detailer sold it as career enhancement. This overseas tour was a surprise since previous one was also overseas."

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